The Child of Nature:

The Feral Child and the State of Nature

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A PhD Thesis

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis offers a reading of feral children in literature and culture from the seventeenth century until the first decades of the twentieth century. "Feral children" are taken to be individuals who have grown up, or spent some part of their childhood, in a condition of solitude. It also refers to infants who have been brought up, or temporarily nurtured, by animals.

The chief concerns of the thesis are the problems that such children raised in defining what it was to be human. In order to elucidate this question, I interpret first-hand and fictional accounts of feral children within the context of ideas concerning language, political concepts of the state of nature, the idea of the soul, and images of race.

The introduction explores some key historical areas of interest in the consideration of the feral child. The first chapter offers readings of the Romulus and Remus story, and anecdotes drawn from the writings of Sir Kenelm Digby and Bernard Connor. The second chapter examines the case of Peter the Wiild Boy as discussed by Daniel Defoe, and the third chapter considers the Savage Girl of Champagne and her place in the writings of Lord Monboddo. The fourth chapter interprets the case of the Wild Boy of Aveyron in the context of Enlightenment thought on the origins of language and society. The fifth chapter is concerned with Kaspar Hauser, a boy allegedly brought up the isolation of a single windowless room. In a coda to this chapter, I suggest links between the romance elements of the Hauser story (he was considered by many to be an abandoned Prince) and Edgar Rice Burroughs' *Tarzan of the Apes* (New York: 1914). The sixth chapter explores the racial meanings of the feral child in Kipling's *Jungle Books*. The final chapter offers a conclusion to the ideas raised in the thesis, and suggests that in the period from the 1850's to the 1910's the discourses of "savagery" used to describe the feral child became increasingly applied to ordinary children.

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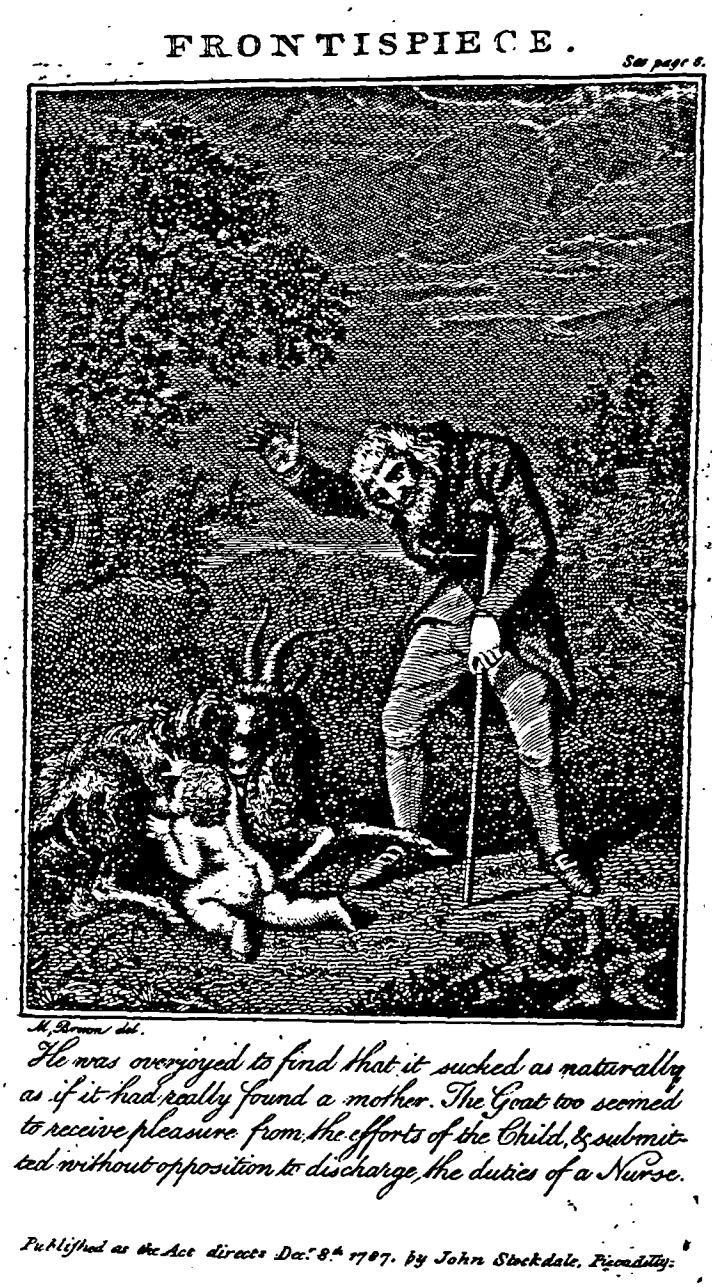
CONTENTS

PREFACE

This thesis is the product of a long period of research. As a result, I have produced a quantity of material, and researched a number of cases, examples, and contexts which could not appear in the finished thesis for reasons of length. These include material on: the "wild man" in early modern literature; the romance of the abandoned child, with particular reference to Shakespeare; Peter the Wild Boy, particularly on the connections to exhibition, textual history, animals, folly, and aristocracy; Simon Ockley, John Kirkby and the philosophical romance of the feral child; the "child of nature" in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries; the child as "Indian", with reference to American contexts, such as the frontier and the captivity narrative; Freud, Frazer, and Edmund Gosse, and the child as pagan; Saki's "Gabriel-Ernest"; the city child and the delinquent as "savage"; scouting movements in Britain and America, with particular reference to Kipling; the case of Kamala and Amala; the uses of the feral child in film; feral children in contemporary literature, particularly, Paul Auster's *The New York Trilogy* and Seamus Heaney's "The Bye-Child".



The Frontispiece to Thomas Day's "The History of Little Jack", from *The Children's Miscellany* (London: 1788).

I knew a Man in the City of London, *who so entirely lost his Voice by a Defluxion of Rheum upon his Lungs and Throat, that he could not speak one Word, so as to be heard; no, not so much as to whisper, yet he would talk, that is to say, endeavour to talk, he would form the Words in his Mouth, and, by his Tongue and Palate, as usual, and often think he spoke, when he had made no manner of Sound to be heard: It was really a moving sight to see the poor Gentleman striving with the fatal obstruction, heaving with his Breath to add Force to its passing, and to utter something; and the same Cold or Defluxion, affecting his Hearing too, he was very miserable; for he laboured for Speech, and when he had with sweating and straining, forced his Words into Sound (as he thought) he would be under grievous Agonies and Disappointments, when he found he had not been heard; for he could not tell when he spoke, and when he did not; sometimes a Word or two would be heard, and sometimes not; and this Hoarseness continued near two Years upon him, and by the labouring and straining for Speech, together with the Distemper itself, he brought himself into a Consumption, which killed him* (Defoe, 1726b: 74-75).

Man, the Prince of animated beings, who is a miracle of Nature, and for whom all things on this earth were created, is a mimic animal ... (Carl von Linnæus, 1792: 51).

Antigonus. *I swear to do this - though a present death,*
Had been more merciful. Come on, poor babe.
Some powerful spirit instruct the kites and ravens
To be thy nurses! Wolves and bears, they say,
Casting their savageness aside, have done
Like offices of pity. Sir, be prosperous
In more than this deed does require! And blessing
Against this cruelty fight on thy side,
Poor thing, condemn'd to loss! Exit [with the child].

(Shakespeare, 1974: 1581, Act II, Scene iii, lines 184-192).

INTRODUCTION

In the *Systema Naturæ* (1735), Linnæus begins his classification of the animal kingdom by ordering the types of animals:

MAMMALIA,	covered with hair,	walk on the earth,	speaking.
BIRDS,	covered with feathers,	fly in the air,	singing.
AMPHIBIA,	covered with skin,	creep in warm places,	hissing.
FISHES,	covered with scales,	swim in the water,	smacking.
INSECTS,	covered with armour,	skip on dry ground,	buzzing.
WORMS,	without skin,	crawl in moist places,	silent.

(Linnæus,1792: 32)

The section on mammals commences with the ordering of primates. Two kinds of primate are then distinguished, "Homo" being divided from "Simia". "Homo" is therefore shown to be a genus of the class "Mammalia", of the order of "Primates". The section on "Homo" begins with the injunction, "Nosce te ipsum." Within the genus "Homo", there are to be distinguished six species of human beings: "Ferens", "Americanus", "Europæus", "Asiaticus", "Afer", and "Monstrosus". The "wild man" or "Homo Feri" forms the first subdivision, and consists purely of individual instances of the feral child. Linnaeus further divides this sub-species of humankind into nine examples:

> Wild Men - a - *H.Feri*.
> Walks on all fours, are dumb, and covered with hair.
> 1. A youth found in Lithuania, in 1761, resembling a bear.
> 2. A youth found in Hesse, in 1544, resembling a wolf.
> 3. A youth in Ireland resembling a sheep. *Tulp. Obs.* iv. 9.
> 4. A youth in Bamberg resembling an ox. *Camerarius*.
> 5. A wild youth found, in 1724, in Hanover.

6. Wild boys found, in 1719, in the Pyrenees.
7. A wild girl found, in 1717, in Overyfel.
8. A wild girl found, in 1731, in Champagne.
9. A wild lad found near Leyden. *Boerhaave* (1792: 44-5).

In 1792, Robert Kerr, the translator of the text into English, adds the following note to this information:

> These instances of wild men, and their similitudes, are partly to be attributed to imposture, and in part to exaggeration. Most probably idiots who had strayed from their friends, and who resembled the above animals only in imitating their voices (Linnæus, 1792: 44).[1]

Kerr's scepticism is understandable, and also raises an interesting series of questions. Why does Linnaeus begin his classification of the human race in this way? Why should he wish to show these humans as sometimes resembling an animal species? Why, in this one instance, does an individual human being occupy the position elsewhere occupied in Linnæus's system by a whole "race" or human species? Why is "homo ferens" the only type of human to be manifested by the individual?

This thesis will attempt to answer these questions and others arising from the representation of the feral child. In order to do so, it begins with an analysis of the most famous myth of abandoned children: that is, the foundation of Rome by Romulus and Remus. It then examines descriptions of the feral child from the seventeenth century in the writings of Sir Kenelm Digby and Bernard Connor.

I then offer readings of the representation of the feral child in factual accounts from the 1720's until the early twentieth century. This involves the detailed examination of the major documentary instances of feral and abandoned children. The first of these is the story of "Peter the Wild Boy", who was brought from Hanover to England in 1726. This

concentrates on an analysis of a work by Defoe, though it also refers to pamphlets attributed to Swift and Arbuthnot. There then follows an interpretation of Monboddo's writings on the "Savage Girl of Champagne", and her relation to the orang-outang. A discussion of ideas of the state of nature in political theory and ideas of the origins of language provides the context for a reading of Itard's two case histories of "The Wild Boy of Aveyron". An interpretation of the story of Kaspar Hauser, the foundling of Nuremberg, incorporates an analysis of Edgar Rice Burroughs' *Tarzan of the Apes* (New York: 1914). The thesis ends with a reading of Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book* (London: 1894) and *The Second Jungle Book* (London: 1895), and a consideration of late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century images of the child as "savage".

In tracing the representation of the feral child from the early modern period until the twentieth century, this thesis will be concerned with both continuities and changes. I will argue that contained in the history of the feral child is the record of a shift in interest from the "soul" to "race", from the external to the internal, from the sacred to the psychological - mapping the changing process of defining and delimiting what it is to be a human being. Such a history is bound to be episodic in its nature. We will gauge these underlying processes of change by glimpses. Each recorded case or group of texts regarding the feral child will be read within its own historical context, but it is my intention to show from these isolated incidents a definable and complex process of change.

These cases will draw upon literature from several European countries as well as that of America and the British Empire in India, and the disparate nature of the source material is an inevitable result of the somewhat scattered accounts of feral children. In dealing with

works written in a foreign language, I have given an English translation in the main text. If the translated text is central to the thesis I have placed the quotation in its original language in the endnotes. Unless otherwise stated, quotations are drawn from the first published edition. In the very few instances where no translation is available the quotation is given in its original language in the main text.

In addition to those texts directly discussed in the main body of this thesis, I shall mention here a number of other works which touch on the feral child. Phillipus Camerarius and Nicolaus Tulpius offer brief asides on the feral child in their compendious seventeenth-century works.[2] Camerarius mentions a man who informed him that he had been brought up by cows - Linnaeus's fourth cited example of feral man. Camerarius returns often in his work to a discussion of the marvellous and providential aspects of nature, and his mention of a feral child follows various chapters in which he talks, as his translator puts it, "*Of many strange things whereof none can yeeld a reason*" (1621: 282). Tulpius describes an Irish boy raised by sheep - Linnaeus's third case - in the context of a discussion of the diversity of animal voices. In his Latin treatise, *De Hominum Inter Feras Educatorum Statu Naturali Solitario* (Hanover: Holwein, 1730), Henry Conrad Koenig traces the relation of the feral child to ideas of the state of nature, especially with regards to the idea of natural law.

In *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* (Riga and Leipzig: 1784-91) / *Outlines of a Philosophy of the History of Man* (translated by T. Churchill, London: J. Johnson, 1803), Johann Gottfried von Herder makes mention of feral children in relation to the use of language. He argues that humanity's use of language stems from our erect posture. The acquisition of such a posture habituates human beings to the idea of learning, and so

makes each of us a "living art" (1803, 1: 152): "man is all art" (1803, 1: 153). The highest form of our artificiality is our use of speech. Language frees the innate capacity for reason and unites the senses. Those without speech, like the "deaf and dumb" (1803, 1: 154), remain in a brutal state, unable to acquire rational ideas. The human being in this condition is purely an imitative animal:

> He imitates whatever his eye sees, whether good or bad: and he imitates it less perfectly than the ape, because he wants the internal criterion of discrimination, and even sympathy with his own species. We have more than one instance of a person born deaf and dumb, who murdered his brother in consequence of having seen a pig killed, and tore out his bowels with tranquil pleasure, merely in imitation of what he saw: a dreadful proof how little man's boasted understanding, and the feelings of the species, can effect of themselves (1803, 1: 154-5).

The sense of the state of nature as fundamentally imitative will reappear in the accounts of feral children, and the connection of this mimicry to the faculty of human sympathy will prove crucial in formulating an idea of our civilised relation to the state of nature.

Herder had already drawn conclusions regarding the wild state of humanity from the behaviour of feral children. Here he goes on to explore the relation of the feral child to the rational and civilising use of language. He describes how human beings are the only animals capable of intentional speech, and distinguishes rational language from the speech of lunatics and the imagined possibility of apes attaining speech through imitativeness. Through their connection to the beasts, the feral child fails to attain an erect posture, and so does not acquire language:

> Men, who have been accidentally brought up among beasts, not only lose the use of speech, but in some measure the power of acquiring it: an evident proof, that their throats are deformed, and that human speech is consistent only with an erect gait. For though several brutes have organs of speech

> resembling those of men, no one is capable of that *continued* stream of voice, which issues from the free, exalted, human breast, and man's narrow, artfully closed mouth (1803, 1: 157).

Through this failure to acquire language, the feral child remains outside full human nature. It lives in the imitative world of the beasts, removed from the interplay of sympathy, and exiled from the knowledge of the difference of things, which is only learnt from intercourse with others. It is lost among the animals, "*the dumb ones of the Earth*", and can never attain '*the divine art of ideas*" (1803, 1: 158). Herder's insistence on the artificiality of humanity is a note that reverberates throughout writings on the feral child and the state of nature. However, his insistence that sympathy, and hence knowledge of others, is impossible in that state of nature had already been met with dissenting voices.

In 1811, Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, the German anthropologist, wrote a brief treatise on feral children, concentrating on the case of Peter the Wild Boy.[3] Blumenbach is a sceptical reader of such accounts, and is at pains to show how mythical and fantastic material was quickly overlaid onto the framework of a simple case of the abandonment of a mute child by its parents, only a few months or so before Peter's discovery in July 1724. Blumenbach sees in the whole story "a striking example of the uncertainty of human testimony and historical credibility" (Blumenbach, 1865: 334). He similarly dismisses the other Linnaean examples of "Homo Ferens".

Blumenbach's conclusion is that where any credence can be given to these stories, no example of a "feral child" has enough in common with any other to provide substantive information regarding the "original Man of Nature":

> Only in this were they like each other, that contrary to the instinct of nature,

> they lived alone, separated from the society of men, wandering about here and there; a condition, whose opposition to what is natural has been already compared by Voltaire to that of a lost solitary bee (Blumenbach, 1865: 339).

Blumenbach asserts that "Man is a domestic animal" (340), the animal that domesticated itself. For this reason, a "feral" instance of a human being would reveal nothing about the essential nature of humanity. If a pet dog is taken back to the wilds it will return to its wild nature, because that nature is somehow contained within its domesticated self. Blumenbach argues that a human being similarly placed in a wild and savage environment would not simply return to an essential feral nature, imagined as located within the history of the human:

> ... all those so-called wild children in their other behaviour, and nature, &c., strikingly differed one from another, for the very reason that they had no originally wild species to degenerate into, for such a race of mankind, which is the most perfect of all sorts of domestic animals that have been created, no where exists, nor is there any position, any mode of life, or even climate which would be suitable for it (Blumenbach, 1865: 340).

Blumenbach here focuses attention on an area of debate central to the representation of the feral child over the three to four hundred years from the early modern period to the end of The First World War. It may be that we can trace a shift from a belief in humanity being essentially political, social, artificial, and, above all, language-using in the early modern period to an image of human essentiality, or interiority, being best understood in terms of a hidden primitive self, manifested in the child or in the "savage" in the post-Enlightenment. Such a broad outline can be deceptive: for instance, Blumenbach manifests the "earlier" tendency. There are various ways to account for this shift. The most obvious is the influence of evolutionary theories, including those that did attempt to show that the origin of the human was in the animal, and the origin of the civilised in the "savage". This will appear most clearly

in my consideration of Edgar Rice Burroughs and Rudyard Kipling.

Another, and equally compelling, context is the development of political theories concerning the state of nature. It may be that Blumenbach was here specifically countering the influence of certain of Rousseau's theories concerning the origin of the political sphere. In any case, the redefinition of the political sphere in the formulation of a theory of a "state of nature" bears strongly upon the image of what it is to be human.

I would not like to give the impression that a simple historical change is being described here. There are instances in early modern texts where we can see something very like a notion of essential "savagery", and modern texts that would argue strongly for the artificiality of the human. Indeed, it may be that our late twentieth-century ideas of the human as defined in the artificial have returned to those of the early modern period, partly in reaction against the image of human interiority as realised in the primitive. For instance, Arthur Mitchell's *The Past in the Present* (Edinburgh: 1880) rehearses many of the political arguments of the earlier texts. Human beings are shown to require the artifice of society in order to be fully human.

These issues are best investigated by close critical readings of the specific literary texts. However, for purposes of clarity I will assert that always at issue in the representation of the feral child is an attempt to define the human being, most often through the relationship between interiority and appearance, being and history, and "savagery" and artifice.

In *Anatomie et Physiologie Du Systême Nerveux en Général, et Du Cerveau en Particulier* (Paris: F. Schoell, 1810: Vol. 2, 23-51), Franz Joseph Gall and Johann Caspar Spurzheim indicates the direction of much of the later discussion of feral children. Their

consideration of the feral child occurs in the context of a discussion of the soul ("*l'âme*") and the spirit (*l'esprit*). They argue that the disposition and properties of the soul and spirit are innate and depend upon their "organisation" and not on material conditions. They assert that the soul resides in the structure of the brain (1810, 2: 23-4). For this reason, the human being (like all other animals) is born with his or her nature intact, bound by certain inescapable instincts. Gall and Spurzheim are setting themselves against a tradition of philosophical thought begun by Locke, but in French terms linked with the work of Condillac and Tracy. With regard to the feral child educated by Itard, they are eager to assert that he is simply an imbecile, someone whose organisation is defective (2: 28-9). They ridicule the image of the state of nature. The human being is a creature realised in society, but with an innate disposition for that society.

Gall and Spurzheim's work on the feral child occupies a pivotal place. In its discourse we can see the enunciation of two clear strands of interest in the feral child. The first places the feral child firmly in the context of debates concerning the existence and nature of the human soul. This area of interest begins with the earliest accounts of feral children in English, and persists, though with many changes, into the discussion of Kaspar Hauser in the 1830's. The second, closely allied to this debate, is the question of whether the defining qualities of a human being are acquired or innate. It is this second question which has most exercised later writers on the subject of the feral child, more or less restating the political arguments of the "state of nature" debate.

Twentieth-century texts have often repeated the agenda of these earlier accounts. Two text books of the 1940's demonstrate this later development. Kimball Young's *Sociology*

(New York: American Book Company, 1942), a university text book, begins with an account of the feral child. One implication of this is that Young wished to demonstrate that society itself begins in something akin to the condition of the feral child. Young declares that the feral child "proves" that "Our individualism itself is a social-cultural product" (1942: 3). The text uses feral children as a means of asserting human reliance upon society. Without the nurture of others we would not be properly human. In *Principles of Anthropology* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1947), another university text book, Eliot Dismore Chapple and Carleton Stevens Coon discuss feral children in the context of whether heredity or environment is the cause of the development of the personality. The most informative book on the subject of feral children remains J.A.L Singh and Robert Zingg's *Wolf-Children and Feral Man* (New York: Archon Books, 1942). The first part of this book consists of Singh's account of the case of Kamala and Amala, two girls supposedly brought up by wolves. The second part of the book is Zingg's *Feral Man and Cases of Extreme Isolation*. Zingg's account offers details of most of the relevant cases, though his bibliography does not include all the relevant material. He writes from a psychological perspective, and as a firm believer in the veracity of these tales.

More recently, Douglas Keith Candland's *Feral Children and Clever Animals* (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 1993) has deepened the debate by concentrating on the breakdown of distinctions between human beings and animals from the standpoint of a clinical psychologist. This constitutes a major preoccupation in the representation of the feral child. I will explore this theme most fully in my discussions of Peter the Wild Boy, Burroughs, and Kipling.

In *Les Relations Avec Autrui Chez L'Enfant* (1951) (Paris: 1975), Maurice Merleau-Ponty initiates a philosophical interest in the feral child which is, in part, existentialist, and linguistic. He uses feral children to show that there is an optimum period for receptivity in language acquisition, and that if this period is missed then language will not be fully acquired. Merleau-Ponty argues that it is particularly absence from the mother which impedes the progress of language acquisition. He suggests that the loss of speech occurs when there is a loss of an other, that speech symbolises and enacts a condition of reciprocity. The feral child is without others, and without the ability to enter into relation with others. The process of learning to speak is akin to the psychoanalytic process of "identification" (1971: 18). To acquire speech means to assume a series of roles, to become, or to act out the other: "Apprendre à parler, c'est apprendre à jouer une série de *rôles*. C'est assumer une série de conduites ou de gestes linguistiques" (1971: 18). In Merleau-Ponty's reading, the feral child is someone who cannot assume a social role - a child without a mask. This inability (sometimes to be read as a refusal) is due to the feral child's supposed removal from the processes of identification which form the basis of our relationships with others. The feral child's abandonment is more extreme than at first might be supposed. He or she is lost, and is, moreover, without the ability to form a self by identification with others. In losing reciprocity the feral child loses speech: in losing speech it loses relatedness. Once the time of life passes by which recognition of others might be achieved, the feral child is forever incapable of entering into a relationship with an other. Merleau-Ponty imagines language as a medium between two consciousnesses, as the frame or situation in which reciprocity or understanding might occur. Yet that medium in constituting the situation of the human being

also constitutes his or her consciousness.

These abstract notions offer a starting point for the theoretical or speculative aspects of this thesis. However, I intend that this speculation will be grounded in literary critical readings of the narratives. These readings will demonstrate that there are alternative ways of reading the relationship between the feral child and others, and various ways in which the question of role-playing proves central to the representation of the feral child.

In *Wolf Children* (London: NLB, 1972: 56) / *Les Enfants sauvages* (Paris: Union Générale d'Editions, 1964) , Lucien Malson discusses Merleau-Ponty's ideas, and concurs with his theory of a period of language receptivity. Otherwise, Malson offers a reading of feral children which argues that "... man has no nature ..." (1972: 9). He asserts that since human nature can only appear in the artificial context of society, then feral children offer us no insight into an essential human nature - since no such essence in fact exists. For this reason, the feral child may well be seen, as some previous observers have felt, as not really human at all.

Malson also makes use of Claude Lévi-Strauss's *The Elementary Structures of Kinship / Les Structures Élementaires de la Parenté* (London: 1968). In the revised edition of this work, Lévi-Strauss comments favourably, if condescendingly, on Malson:

> In the first place I have corrected a number of typographical errors which certain rather uncharitable scholars have been prepared to see as errors on my part. Such is the case with Lucien Malson, who, in his excellent little book, *Les Enfants sauvages*, thus reproaches me for certain data for which I am not responsible, but which come from writers whom I quote and with whom he does not agree. Nevertheless, I do believe he is justified in considering the two or three short pages devoted to his own particular problem as of scant use, and the solution, right or wrong, that I adopt as adding very little to the question (1968: xxvii).

Lévi-Strauss's solution is, however, an intriguing one. He begins by asserting that a distinction between "nature" and "culture" is useful, even though no human beings have ever lived without culture. In other words, the "state of nature" is only a concept, myth, and not a fact - but it is a useful myth. What the myth expresses is the fact that human beings are both biological beings and social individuals. The relation between these two states is complex:

> Culture is not merely juxtaposed to life nor superimposed upon it, but in one way serves as a substitute for life, and in the other, uses and transforms it, to bring about the synthesis of a new order (1968: 4).

To writers like Monboddo and Itard, the feral child appears to offer an embodiment of one half of that complex relationship, the human as biological specimen, as merely a member of the species, *homo sapiens*. Lévi-Strauss demurs on this point, guessing that such children were in fact simply "defectives" (5). Wild children are cultural manifestations of certain images, anxieties and desires: they are not embodiments of an original human state. For Lévi-Strauss, no human being can exemplify the pre-cultural. The feral child is simply acultural. It is not an origin.

For all the surface irritations, Malson and Lévi-Strauss are, at the deepest level, in agreement. Both believe that the feral child's behaviour exemplifies nothing but the prejudices of those who observe their behaviour. The child embodies a myth, which is just a myth. The feral child is not "natural": it is aberrant. The feral child dramatises the split between our selves as bodies and our selves as social beings. Yet, for Lévi-Strauss and Malson, that dramatisation is merely wish-fulfilment. What it enacts is the ubiquity of the iron cage of culture. Perhaps it might be said that only while the idea of a "state of nature" presented a divide that could be believed in were the conditions right for an intellectual

interest in the factual narrative of the feral child. Before that point the story was preferred as romance, the working out of the miraculous in nature. Afterwards, the child became merely exemplary of the impossibility of anything other than the political or the cultural. In this context, Malson's reading is suggestive, placing the feral child in the odd position of being outwardly human and yet not exhibiting a "human nature", since this can only manifest itself in social terms.

The feral child exists in the fissure between nature and culture. The most apparent manifestation of that fracture is silence. This is a silence that is more than the antithesis of speech: it is its negation. The history of the feral child is therefore the record of what has been interpreted from, or imposed upon that silence. In the feral child a culture can seem to witness itself transformed into the other, an otherness that might annihilate or ratify its own customary self-image.

Reference is sometimes made in this thesis to a "system of signs" or a "field of discourse". I am sceptical about the existence of such totalising systems. However, like Lévi-Strauss's nature-culture split, the idea of such a system may prove a convenient myth which allows for a fuller discussion of some of the issues raised by the representation of feral children. Sometimes, I also make reference to historical changes and processes in such a way as might suggest that I actually believe in a totalising theoretical understanding of history. I have no such belief. These over-arching historical assessments offer only a generalised version of the burgeoning, complex and multifarious meanings present in the actual narratives of the feral child. For this reason, one assumption in this thesis is that each case discussed reveals both individual idiosyncrasies which cannot necessarily be explained by reference to

the culture of the period, and yet that none of these cases can be fully understood without placing it in the context of its historical and cultural moment.

What all these stories have in common is a concern with that which makes us wonder - the emotion which the Greeks saw as the foundation for all philosophy. It is in the articulation of the feral child as miraculous (as in the early modern romances), or as interesting, or exemplary (as in the case histories), that the real subject of this thesis lies - particularly where the sense of miracle alludes to that uniqueness which defines the human.

CHAPTER ONE

THE MERCY OF FORTUNE

Part One - The Myth of Foundation: The Romulus and Remus Story

The representation of the feral child begins with a myth of foundation. The story of Romulus and Remus has many counterparts in the myth and literature of antiquity. The hero who is abandoned at birth, and brought up by animals or shepherds is a common figure in many foundation stories. Features of the archetypal story appear in: the education of Cyrus; the abandonment of Moses; the infancy of Semiramis, founder of Babylon; the story of Oedipus; the childhood of Amphion; the exposure of Paris, and his being suckled for five days by a bear; the story of Tyro, and Neleus and Pelias; the feeding of the infant Aleas by a doe; and even, as we shall see, the nativity of Christ. Often these heroes go on to become the founders of cities - as Amphion, for example, goes on to found the city of Thebes.[1] The story was a popular one in classical drama, and was to be re-used by Shakespeare in his late plays. Menander made use of the story of Tyro in *Epitrepontes*, and Sophocles's *Tyro* was famous for its recognition scene which was praised by Aristotle in the *Poetics*.

Most importantly, the story of the abandoned child, particularly in the Romulus and Remus version, became a reference point for most later writers on the subject of the feral child. An elucidation of the story therefore serves as a means to understand the original meanings of their representation. As will be seen, these meanings are primarily political.

The basic plot used in these stories of abandonment can be sketched as follows: the hero's mother engages in an irregular union - often she is a virgin impregnated by a god. The errant woman's father hearing of her sin sentences her to death, and orders the exposure of her child. The child is left to die, usually in a forest or by water, but is unexpectedly rescued by an animal, who gives suck to the infant. The child is found by a shepherd and brought up by him as part of his family. The child shines in its pastoral surroundings, and is therefore eventually recognised in its true identity. The child avenges itself and its mother against the bad parent, and rules in place of the father, often then founding a new city.

The story of Romulus and Remus as found in Ovid and Plutarch follows this narrative closely. The twins are the children of Rhea Silvia, daughter of Numitor, the King of Alba Longa. Numitor is deposed by his brother, Amulius. In order to prevent Rhea Silvia from having offspring and so continuing Numitor's lineage, Amulius forces her to become a Vestal Virgin. However, a ghostly and very large phallus appears in the temple of the Vestal Virgins and impregnates Rhea. Amulius is mad with rage, but Rhea protests that it is the god Mars who is responsible for her pregnancy. On the birth of twin sons, Amulius orders that the infants should be exposed. They are taken to the River Tiber, where they are left to the mercy of fortune, as North's Plutarch puts it. The children are then suckled by a she-wolf and fed by a woodpecker, until they are discovered

by a shepherd named Faustulus.

Faustulus and his wife, Acca Larentia, bring up the children, who turn out to be virile, courageous, and audacious. The twins later lead a band of brigands who raid the countryside. Eventually the true identity of the boys is discovered. They overthrow Amulius and restore Numitor to the throne of Alba Longa. The twins then set out to found a colony, a city of their own. However, according to some versions of the story, in the course of building this city, Romulus and Remus argue and come to blows, Romulus slaying his brother. The city is founded and populated by brigands and criminals. As the latter are all men, Romulus fears that the colony will fail, and so, to ensure the continuation of the city, he abducts a large number of women from the Sabine tribe.

This is the foundation myth of Rome. However, it should be remembered that this myth is in fact only one point in a series of foundational narratives beginning with the foundation of Alba by Aeneas, and so leading back to Troy. In Roman terms, foundation is not a once and for all event, but a series of separate foundations, each of which is connected to a previous foundation. That the foundation of the city is thus always a restoration and never an absolute beginning was to have profound consequences for the political life of Rome, and therefore for later ideas of the state of nature.

The story of Romulus and Remus has come down to us in several versions. There are many images of the twins suckling the she-wolf in statuary and on Roman coins - although some have argued that the scene is actually an allegorical image depicting courage (Bremmer and Horsfall, 1987: 25). Curiously, the image of the twins suckling is probably the only representation of Romulus in Roman art. The most famous example of the image is the Capitoline Wolf, now in the Palazzo dei Conservatori, where the wolf is shown standing up while the two infants reach up to suckle from its teats.

According to Apollodorus, the legend of the exposed twins may have passed from Sophocles's *Tyro* to the Roman historian Q. Fabius Pictor, and so to the major tellers of the tale, Livy, Plutarch, and Ovid. Livy's *History* offers an ironic account of the story. In Book 8 of the *Aeneid*, Virgil offers a significantly more elevated version in the context of the description of the shield of Aeneas, focusing on the moment when the she-wolf gives suck to the abandoned infants. There is a brief mention of the myth in the third of Juvenal's *Satires*. Plutarch's life of Romulus offers the clearest account of the story, and may be, with Ovid's *Fasti*, the chief form in which the story was known in the early modern period. Ovid's text give the fullest poetical version of the myth.

As it now exists, the *Fasti* consists of the first six books of a projected twelve-book poem recounting the myths behind the feasts of the Roman calendar. This strangely underrated poem takes the form of a series of tales and incidents - the premise behind the work not allowing for a continuous narrative. Ovid chose to write the poem in elegiacs, returning to this metre after the grand hexameters of the *Metamorphoses*. In a brilliant historical study of the *Fasti*, Geraldine Herbert-Brown describes the consequences of Ovid's decision:

> Ovid's chosen metre is as good as a statement: no grand historical narrative is to be expected here, despite the size of the poem. Great things are to be celebrated, but from a different perspective now, and they are to be handled in a lighter vein than hitherto. Nothing too tragic, and doses of Ovidian humour and cheek may be anticipated. This is a new genre, a middle road between the opposite extremes of frivolous amatory elegy, and the sublime grandeur of the epic (Herbert-Brown, 1994: 7).

The context for Ovid's writing is the praise of Augustus Caesar through an account of the festivals of the Roman calendar. The work is therefore to be viewed as intimately connected to the official ideology of the Augustan régime (Herbert-Brown, 1994: vii). Augustus's reform of the calendar in 46 B.C. left the religious festival dates intact. These

festivals acted as yearly reminders of Roman history or legend. They provided a means by which the past could be re-evoked in the present. The story of Romulus and Remus therefore plays an especially important role in the *Fasti*: it is this story in particular which draws to mind the origin and continuity of Rome.

Augustus had styled himself the second founder of Rome, and as such had supplanted Romulus's prime position in Roman legend, though in such a way as to bring to mind comparisons with the original founder. For reasons which I will discuss in a moment, Augustus decided not to take Romulus as his own name. Romulus appeared in many ways to be a discreditable ancestor. Ovid's aim in writing of Romulus is to flatter Augustus by comparison, often through a subtle denigration of the first king of Rome, and, at the same time to redeem Romulus for the purposes of propaganda. Even though his manifest purpose is to belittle the original founder and aggrandise Augustus, in linking the two men at all he nonetheless suggests that points of comparison can be drawn.

In the *Fasti*, Romulus is an ambiguous figure, both venerated father and ridiculed ne'er-do-well. This ambiguity is not of Ovid's making: it is something traditionally found in the image of Romulus. Ovid cannot avoid the discussion of Romulus, and so therefore what is required is a use of Rome's antiquity which can be used in the present. For this reason, it may be that the text attempts to make sense of the duality of Rome's founder in such a way as to praise her present ruler. Herbert-Brown argues that this involves a rejection of the mythic in favour of the political (1994: 52). The poem shows how Augustus replaces Romulus's crimes with festivals. Where Romulus's acts found the social realm through indecency, Augustus's laws rebuild the social through the acting of communal purpose.

A large part of Ovid's treatment of Romulus occurs in a long section explaining

the origin of the Lupercal. Frazer's discussion of the Lupercal in his edition of the *Fasti* is instructive when considering the uses of the story of the abandoned child. In the festival, naked boys (the Luperci) armed with thongs of goatskin ran around the boundary of the ancient city of Rome on the Palatine. As they ran they struck all they met with the thongs of goatskin, making especially sure to strike women. Frazer identifies the festival with a legend of bestiality between Roman women and he-goats. He dismisses as "pointless" (1929, 2: 365) Plutarch's explanation that the boys repeated the run made by Romulus and Remus following their murder of Amulius.

However, it is possible that both explanations throw light upon the myth. In either case, a transgressive act is transformed into a celebratory and purificatory rite. In the myth, the murder of Amulius was followed by the "pointless" run to the site of the boys' abandonment, a moment which we might see as linking the transgression of killing to the beneficial transgression of the infants' contact with the she-wolf. The repetition of the run around the walls of the city of Rome indicates that this connection is then further linked to the idea of foundation, the runners literally marking out the boundaries of the political realm.

Frazer's exploration of the Romulus and Remus story takes him into an account of feral children stories in the India of the late nineteenth century. In Roman terms the story continued to remain associated with the idea of beginnings. The first Roman silver coins to be issued were marked with a representation of the she-wolf and the twins (Cornell, 1996: 61). In the *Fasti* Book III, lines 71-6, Ovid describes how March, the first month of the Roman year, came to be named after Mars, the father of Romulus and Remus.

As I have already suggested, the most striking quality of the foundation myth for

Romans of the Augustan era was the way in which it systematically strayed into the discreditable and the transgressive. The myth was embroiled in shamefulness. The Romulan colonists were all brigands and criminals. The brothers themselves spent their youth living as bandits. The city was populated through the mass-abduction of the Sabine women. Their mother had conceived either through the ludicrous intervention of a large and spectral phallus, or through some other hidden and equally scandalous means: Ovid, in particular, stresses the disgrace of the Vestal Virgin (*Fasti*, 1929, 1: Book III, lines 45-8). Romulus's murder of Remus was disputed in some accounts, but nonetheless forms a significant aspect of the story. Even the death of Romulus is ambivalent: either he ascended to heaven as the god Quirinus, or he was murdered and dismembered in the senate.

Indeed the story casts so shameful a light upon the origins of Rome that some writers and scholars have seen it as evidence of anti-Roman propaganda. Cornell (London and New York: 1995), T.P. Wiseman (Cambridge: 1995), and Bremmer / Horsfall (London: 1987) have cast doubt on this reading. Wiseman sees the story as the product of Roman propaganda. Cornell and Bremmer / Horsfall believe that in actual fact the story was old and indigenous. The story was well-established by the third century B.C., and may well have existed earlier (Beard, 1996: 3).

There is evidence that one transgressive element that some Romans actively tried to question was precisely the twins' suckling of the she-wolf. Curiously, this led historians and writers to introduce another shameful link. Acca Larentia, the wife of Faustulus, was probably a late addition to the story, and may be traced to Ennius (Bremmer / Horsfall, 1987: 32). The intervention of the she-wolf apparently worried writers due to its unseemly improbability. Ennius realised that the word "lupa" can mean

either "she-wolf" or "prostitute". He therefore replaced the wolf with a prostitute, Acca Larentia. Plutarch writes:

> But some say that the name of the children's nurse, by its ambiguity, deflected the story into the realm of the fabulous. For the Latins not only called she-wolves "lupae," but also women of loose character, and such a woman was the wife of Faustulus, the foster-father of the infants, Acca Larentia by name. Yet the Romans sacrifice also to her, and in the month of April the priest of Mars offers libations in her honour, and the festival is called Larentalia (1914: 101).

This desire to remove the wolf from the story may lead us to wonder why she was there in the first place. In *Cultes Héroiques Romains* (Paris: 1980), Bernadette Liou-Gille argues that the use of the she-wolf had several significant meanings. Firstly, it would draw into the story the idea of prostitution, and therefore of sexual license and disorder (particularly if we bear in mind John Boswell's work on the fate of abandoned children, who often were sold into prostitution (London: 1989)). Secondly, the wolf was a savage animal. Its intervention in the story drew into the myth an idea of the absence of culture. Thirdly, the wolf was an infernal animal, and was strongly linked to the idea of death. The children's encounter with a merciful wolf might therefore possess meanings relating to the idea of rebirth from death.

There may be other explanations. As Livy points out, the wolf is sacred to Mars, and so the intervention of a wolf would add credence to a story which presented Mars as the father of the exposed children (1925, 1: 17-19). The addition of the woodpecker similarly would have indicated the presence of Mars, since the bird was associated with that God (Bremmer / Horsfall, 1987: 31; Pseudo-Aurelius Victor, 1983: 100):

> Here, then, the babes lay, and the she-wolf of story gave them suck, and a woodpecker came to help in feeding them and to watch over them. Now these creatures are considered sacred to Mars, and the woodpecker is held in especial veneration and honour by the Latins, and this was the chief reason why the mother was believed when she declared that Mars was the

father of her babes (Plutarch, 1914: 99).

Livy remarks that the infants' relation to Mars is particularly apt considering all that Rome has attained through the art of war (Livy, 1925: 5).

As has been said already, the shameful and transgressive aspects of the Romulus and Remus story are features of a number of other such foundation myths. Abandonment at birth is a mark of destiny for the young hero. The birth of the foundational hero is seen to take place despite the hostility of the older generation. The use of the motif in the Oedipus myth springs to mind in this context. Bremmer and Horsfall are sceptical about psychoanalytic readings in the accounts of the pregnancy of the hero's mother (1987: 29). However, it seems clear that the Romulus and Remus story begins with the murderous hostility of Amulius, the uncle, or, in some versions of the myth, the incestuous father of the twins. The replacement of Amulius with Mars as putative father of the children may also be a way of reducing blame against the actual father in the account of their exposure.

Frazer remarks that Amulius had killed Numitor's existing sons (Frazer, 1929, 2: 366). This would make Romulus and Remus replacements for a murdered generation. The idea of substitution appears elsewhere in the foundation narrative. It emerges chiefly in relation to the theme of parenthood. The story relates the replacement of the bad parent of culture, a father, by the good parent of nature, a mother. This temporary substitution, with its suggestion of a divine father as the true parent, leads to the reversal of a usurpation in the political realm. The deposition of Numitor by Amulius is reversed, and healed, by the return of the lost younger generation. The rebellious adolescence of the twins, their "seditious boldness and temper" (Plutarch, 1914: 105 - a phrase left untranslated by North), is in fact a preparation for their part in securing the restoration of rightful authority.

The foundation myth's use of the feral child motif shows that the story is fundamentally concerned with such restorations and rightful substitutions. All these later turns of the narrative depend upon one essential moment of substitution: the instant when the she-wolf saves the lost children. A transgressive mercy removes the harmful influence of a murderous culture. The moment is properly a second birth. Where death is expected, succour is given. The child is miraculously born into the order of nature. This can be seen in the concern with naming in Plutarch's *Life of Romulus*. The narrative begins with the desire to find the reason why Rome has that name - a name which turns out to be located in a person. However, the name of Romulus itself derives from the wolf who fed him in his abandonment: "Moreover, we are told that they were named from 'ruma,' the Latin word for *teat*, Romulus and Romus (or Remus), because they were seen sucking the wild beast" (Plutarch, 1914: 103). Their naming places them in the order of nature - their identity derives from the moment when they crossed over the boundary between the human and the animal, fixing on the physical point at which their removal from culture is located.[2]

Yet the origin of Romulus and Remus belonged as much to the divine as to the merely natural. Livy remarks, with a little irony, that it is a privilege of the myths of antiquity to mingle the divine and the human (1929: 5). The divine origin of the children may only have been an excuse made by an erring virgin (Livy, 1925: 17 and 19). However, it places the children symbolically in two worlds - that of the gods and that of the human. The divinity which created the children also guards them from danger. It is the intervention of a god which allows for the intervention of nature. In either case, their origin is no longer the city - though it is they who restore justice to it. Their home is the place of wild nature, where they found a city of their own, the city of Rome. The city as

emblem of culture is founded by a person who represents its limits: the child outside culture who becomes cultural through the strength and essential nobility of his own nature.

In Plutarch, Remus talks of the strangeness of his birth and infancy. He and his twin were cast out to be killed by wild animals, and were instead nourished by them. Ovid also presents the unexpectedness of the twins' fate:

> A she-wolf which had cast her whelps came, wondrous to tell, to the abandoned twins: who could believe that the brute would not harm the boys? Far from harming, she helped them; and they whom ruthless kinsfolk would have killed with their own hands were suckled by a wolf! (Ovid, 1929: 79 and 81)

Nature's mercy admonishes humanity's unnatural cruelty. Only a miracle restores the imbalance created by human iniquity. Nature and the divinity of Mars rectify the savagery of the civilised. This return of the child to a restorative kindness ratifies the lost values of the human community. From this experience the city may begin over again, re-founded, just as the lost boys were found, in the building of Rome.

The Romulus and Remus myth was known to all educated writers from the medieval period onwards, either from first-hand reading of Livy, Virgil, Juvenal, Ovid, Apollodorus, or Plutarch, or simply from knowledge of the common store of classical myth. It may be that direct reading of the sources fed into later treatments of the story of the abandoned child. I would argue for instance that acquaintance with Ovid's *Fasti* and North's translation of Plutarch bear directly upon Shakespeare's treatment of the theme in his last plays, particularly in *Cymbeline*. Of course Shakespeare was also drawing upon a tradition of romance, from Longus, through the medieval romances such as *Octavian* and *La Freine*, to *Valentine and Orson*, and culminating in Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*. A consideration of this tradition and its development in Spenser and

Shakespeare cannot be fully written here. For now it is enough to say that the political meanings of the Roman foundation myth were reworked in these narratives, as was the idea of the "mercie of fortune" (North, 1895: 77) and the miraculous influences on human fate. However, some of these meanings would appear with clarity in the more sharply defined example of the "wild man" in early modern pageantry and dramatic representations.[3]

In John Lyly's entertainments presented for Queen Elizabeth's progress we find several moments in which a "wild man" is tamed, civilised, and granted rational language through his first contact with the presence of the queen.[4] In this way, the "wild men" could embody an image of the transition between the state of nature and the artifice of civilisation, inspired by the presence of spiritual authority, and culminating in the sudden acquisition of courtly speech. Though this act of transition symbolised the necessary break from the life of the instincts, and a renunciation equated with becoming human, becoming civilised, there remains the sense that this renunciation might itself be instinctive, as well as being perhaps supernatural. The presence of the queen's virgin body presents the image both of just power and of the chaste renunciation of illicit sexuality. The queen's presence shames the "wild man" out of his dumbness.[5] The "wild man's" identification with unbounded and unregulated sexual passion comes into play too. As the iconographic opposite of the chaste and royal virgin, the vanquishing of the "wild man's" sensuality represents the ratification of civilised values. The hierarchy is reinforced through drawing in to the domain of the civilised that which embodies the instinctual pursuit of pleasure without value. The "wild man" exists both at the base of the hierarchy, and also beyond it. Only at that moment in which he is seen to submit to the beauty and power of civilised renunciation does he acquire speech. This moment takes on the form

of a public endorsement of authority. The entertainment creates a staged moment fully commensurable to the meanings within it. The Queen in her own person, and the "wild man" in his ivy-clad disguise, act out fictionally a compliment that all at once conveys, recreates, and momentarily fixes the relations of power. It does so by constructing an act which also mimics the institution of political power as such, evoking the contract that ends the state of nature. This contract takes place between a power that, though bound to history, partakes in the image of an authority which is beyond the human, and a savagery that is timeless, ahistorical, and hence inhuman until the moment at which it assumes its rightful place in the hierarchy of things. This means that it depends upon a sense of the sacredness of monarchy, and, to a lesser extent, of the external world.

The image of the "wild man" outlined here form one basis upon which later images of the feral child were to develop. In particular the representation of Peter the Wild Boy, outlined n the next chapter, depends upon the early modern iconography of the "wild man". More generally, the "wild man's" removal from the sphere of the social through silence, his connection to the primitive and pre-political state of nature, and, at first at least, the inter-relation between the world of the court and the world of the savage are all themes which were to emerge and be reconstituted in the representation of the feral child.

Part Two - The History of Silence: Seventeenth-Century Accounts of Feral Children and "Wild Men"

The first "factual" case of a feral child to receive attention by a British author is that briefly sketched by Sir Kenelm Digby in *Two Treatises. In one of which, The Nature of Bodies; in the other, The Nature of Man's Soule; is looked into: in Way of Discovery, of the Immortality of Reasonable Soules* (Paris: 1644). In the first treatise, on bodies, Digby presents a chapter on the "motions of sense". Digby is here setting out the extent of the corporeal, so as to later clear an area in the person which may be covered by the term "soul". Therefore, Digby first presents the physical and animal nature of the human senses. In order to do this, he asserts the physical quality of even such apparently incorporeal substances as scents or odours. He describes how animals will smell their food before they eat it in order to ascertain its fitness for eating. Digby asserts that human beings would also have such an ability if we had not become so refined, and to prove his point he presents the story of "John of Liege":

> When he was a little boy, there being warres in the country [...] the village of whence he was, had notice of some vnruly scattered troopes that were coming to pillage them: which made all the people of the village fly hastily with what they could carry with them, to hide themselues in the woods [...] There they lay, till some of their scoutes brought them word, that the souldiers of whom they were in such apprehension, had fired their towne and quitted it. Then all of them returned home, excepting this boy; who, it seemeth, being of a very timorous nature, had images of feare so stronge in his fansie; that first, he ranne further into the wood than any of the rest; and afterwardes apprehended that euery body he saw through the thickets, and every voyce he hearde was the souldiers: and so hidd himselfe from his parents, that were in much distresse seeking him all about, and calling his name as loud as they could. When they had spent a day or two in vaine, they returned home without him, and he liued many yeares in the woods, feeding vpon rootes, and wild fruites, and maste.

> He said that after he had beene some time in this wild habitation, he could by the smell iudge of the tast of any thing that was to be eaten: and that he could att a great distance wind by his nose, where wholesome fruites or rootes did grow. In this state he continued (still shunning men with as great feare as when he first ranne away; so strong the impression was, and so little could his reason master it) vntill in a very sharpe winter, that many beastes of the forest perished for want of foode; necessity brought him to so much confidence, that leauing the wild places of the forest, remote from all peoples dwellinges, he would in the eueninges steale among cattle that were fothered; especially the swine, and among them, gleane that which serued to sustaine wretchedly his miserable life. He could not do this so cunningly, but that returning often to it, he was vpon a time espyed: and they who saw a beast of so strange a shape (for such they tooke him to be; he being naked and all ouer growne with haire) beleeuing him to be a satyre, or some such prodigious creature as the recounters of rare accidents tell vs of; layed wayte to apprehend him. But he that winded them as farre off, as any beast could do, still auoyded them, till att the length, they layed snares for him; and tooke the wind so aduantagiously of him, that they caught him: and then, soone perceiued he was a man; though he had quite forgotten the vse of all language: but by his gestures and cryes, he expressed the greatest affrightednesse that might be. Which afterwardes, he said (when he had learned anew to speake) was because he thought, those were the souldiers he had hidden himselfe to auoyde, when he first betooke himselfe to the wood; and were alwayes liuely in his fansie, through his feares continually reducing them thither.
>
> This man within a little while after he came to good keeping and full feeding, quite lost that acutenesse of smelling which formerly gouerned him in his tastes; and grew to be in that particular as other ordinary men were [...] I imagine he his [*sic*] yet aliue to tell a better story of himselfe then I haue done; and to confirme what I haue here said of him: for I haue from them who saw him but few yeares agone, that he was an ablestrong [*sic*] man, and likely to last yet a good while longer (Digby, 1644: 247-8).

In the course of its telling, Digby's anecdotal evidence articulates several details of the myth of the feral child that may prove useful in considering its later developments. The first is that John flees human society as the result of fear. That this fear is only incidentally about the soldiers who sack his village is made clear. Even at first he shuns the society of the other villagers, going deeper into the woods than they. He flees from his parents also when they try and track him down; he evades capture, and when he is finally taken, he mistakes his ordinary neighbours for the murderous soldiers. Thematically, all this

suggests that one initiating force in the narrative of the feral child is fear of others, and particularly of their murderous potential. I have already indicated the potentially Oedipal nature of this fear in the romance narrative of the abandoned child, in which abandonment by a human parent replaces (or often actually is) a murder attempt.

Digby depicts John becoming bestial through his life in the woods. This revealed animality makes him strange to the villagers. In such a way, John's hairiness, the comparison to a satyr, and the intensification of his senses all exemplify an animalistic and physical nature for the human, and of sensuality in general - this being the reason for his inclusion in Digby's treatise. However, in terms of the iconography of the feral child, here is a crucial instance of one persistent theme: that is, the feral child's entry into a world of sensory intensification. Typically, this renewal of the senses through their becoming more animalistic is regretfully lost with the return to civilisation. The brief change in the self occasioned by the immersion in the animal nature of the human is signalled by the loss of language. With the return to the village, the gift of heightened sense is lost. The unique case returns to the social world and to ordinariness. Yet this regained ability to speak enables Digby to close with his final remarks, in which the possibility of doubt concerning his story is parried with an evocation of the continuing presence of his feral prodigy. John of Liege is there, waiting for those who are willing to talk with him.

In his *The History of Poland in Several Letters to Persons of Quality* (London: 1698), Bernard Connor presents a series of anecdotes concerning feral children. Connor was a physician and a Fellow of The Royal Society. He was born in Kerry in about 1666. After completing his medical studies in Montpellier and Paris, he travelled with the two sons of the Grand Chancellor of Poland to Warsaw. At the age of twenty-eight, he was appointed as the private doctor to the King of Poland. In 1695 he returned to England,

where he published a collection of treatises on medical subjects, and was elected as a member of both the Royal Society, and the Royal College of Physicians. Two years later he published a work describing how the miracles of scripture might accord with the apparently unchanging nature of scientific truth. This work, written in Latin, and titled *Evangelium medici, seu Medicina mystica: de suspensis naturae legibus, sive de miraculis* (London: 1697), ran to a second edition in England, and was also popular on the continent. It makes brief mention of the subject of the feral child, but Connor was to return to the subject at greater length in his next work, *The History of Poland.* The text was probably begun in response to a short-lived interest in Polish society following the death of the Polish king. Connor died at the early age of thirty-two, before the work was published.

Connor describes several feral children in the first volume of his two-volume work. He begins with a discussion of the Lithuanian bear-boy, who was found in what was then a wild, remote, and forested province of Poland. It was popularly thought that the abduction of children by bears was a common occurrence in this region. Connor himself claims to have seen a boy brought up by bears living in a convent in Poland:

> He was about ten Years of Age (which might be guessed only by his Stature and Aspect) of a hideous Countenance, and had neither the use of Reason, nor Speech: He went upon all four, and had nothing in him like a Man, except his Human Structure: But seeing he resembled a Rational Creature, he was admitted to the Font, and christen'd; yet still he was restless and uneasy, and often inclined to flight (*History of Poland*, 1: 342).

Even in this brief passage we can see set out most of the key themes for the early consideration of the feral child. Clearly what is at stake is the definition of the human, brought into a moment of dislocation and disturbance through the coupling of the inhuman ("nothing in him like a Man") with the human structure. Furthermore, this anxiety, or

disruption, rapidly turns towards a series of questions which are fundamentally religious, even metaphysical. The notion of belonging becomes a matter of having a place within the body of Christendom: this is merely one of the ways in which the feral child's otherness is, from the first, identified with the otherness of the "savage". Furthermore, the question raised implicitly by these religious anxieties is that of the existence in the apparently human of a human soul, that is, an inner, though manifest, guarantee of distinction from the animal kingdom.

Connor goes on to describe how the boy is trained to stand upright "by clapping up his Body against a Wall, and holding him after the manner that Dogs are taught to beg ..." (1698, 1: 343). Interestingly, in view of the later accounts, it appears that the boy is taught to speak a little: "but being ask'd concerning his course of Life in the Woods, he could not give much better account of it, than we can do of our Actions in the Cradle" (Connor, 1698, 1: 343). This simile becomes a common one in discussions of the feral child, as it does in accounts of the "savage" origins of civilised man. The lack of language enfolds experience itself in silence, burying it in forgetfulness.

Connor describes an earlier case, reported to him in a letter from J.P. Van den Brande de Cleverskerk, the Dutch Ambassador to London, relating to a boy he had seen in 1661:

> Coming to this City of Poland with design to be Present at the Election of a King after John Casimir, who had abdicated the Crown, I enquir'd what was worth seeing in or about this Place: whereupon I was inform'd, among other things, that there was in the Suburbs of the City (which go towards King Casimir's Palace) in a Nunnery, a certain Male Child, who had been brought up among Bears, and who had been taken some time before at a Bear-hunting. Upon this Information I went immediately to that place to satisfy my Curiosity, where I found the aforesaid Boy playing under the Pent-house before the Nunnery Gate. His Age, as well as I remember, I guess'd to be about twelve or thirteen. As soon as I came near him he leap'd towards me as if surpriz'd and pleas'd with my Habit.

> First, he caught one of my Silver Buttons in his hand with a great deal of eagerness, which he held up to his Nose to smell; Afterwards he leap'd all of a sudden into a Corner, where he made a strange sort of Noise not unlike Howling. I went into the House, where a Maid-servant inform'd me more particularly of the Manner of his being taken. But having not with me the Book wherein I wrot *[sic]* my observations in my Travels, I cannot possibly give you an exact Account of it. This Maid call'd the Boy in, and show'd him a good large piece of Bread; which when he saw, he immediately leap'd upon a Bench that was joyn'd to the Wall of the Room, where he walk'd about upon all-four: After which, he rais'd himself upright with a great Spring, and took the Bread in his two Hands, put it up to his Nose, and afterwards leap'd off from the Bench upon the Ground, making the same odd sort of Noise as before. I was told that he was not yet brought to speak, but that they hop'd in short time he would, having his Hearing good. He had some Scars on his Face, which were commonly thought to be Scratches of the Bears (Connor, 1698, 1: 346-7).

Cleverskerk goes on to conjecture that such children are the result of raids by the marauding Tartars, in which the parents are taken into slavery without being able to save their children. This connection between the feral child and times of war stretches back to Procopius's *De Bello Gothico* (London: 1653), and forwards to the case of Clemens of Overdyke.

Cleverskerk's account of his meeting with the feral child provides a fascinating example of the conditions in which these children were at first approached, and in this way suggests much about their initial place in the system of signs. Firstly, it is plain that Cleverskerk approaches the child in a state of mind comparatively empty of expectations. The fact that he visits the boy at all confirms an obvious curiosity concerning his condition; however, unlike later cases in the eighteenth century, and, most significantly, post-Rousseau, there is for Cleverskerk no anticipation that he is to view with his own eyes a personification of an original human nature. The boy's nature is simply not yet a subject for such speculations.

Instead, the boy belongs to a wider and more various group: that is, those who are

"curiosities". Such "curiosities" might here include natural phenomena and sites of cultural interest or beauty, but in the case of human beings, the term "curiosity" means those individuals marked by the extraordinary, those who become subject to ritualised but often informal exhibition. The viewing of the bear-boy is an example of this cultural practice which remains remarkably fixed throughout the various accounts of feral children. It is worthwhile noting here that the exhibition of this child belongs to one major type of such a narrative, in which the curiosity initiating the meeting is reversed, and where the civilised observer himself becomes the object of curiosity. The momentary dislocation which this reversal creates is central both to the literature of the feral child, and to that other literature of which it forms a unique adjunct: that is, the accounts of the moments of contact between "savage" and civilised peoples.

Connor offers one final example of the feral child. In 1669, two children were surprised by huntsmen in the woods of Poland. One of the children managed to get away, but the other was trapped and taken to Warsaw. There he was christened Joseph, and attempts were made to educate him:

> He was about twelve or thirteen years old, as might be guest by his height, but his Maners were altogether bestial; for he not only fed upon raw Flesh, wild Honey, Crab-Apples, and such like Dainties which Bears are us'd to feast with, but also went, like them, upon all-four. After his Baptism he was not taught to go upright without a great deal of difficulty, and there was less hope of ever making him learn the *Polish* Language, for he always continu'd to express his Mind in a kind of Bear-like Tone. Some time after King *Casimir* made a Present of him to *Peter Adam Opalinski*, Vice-Chamberlain of *Posnan*, by whom he was employ'd in the Offices of his Kitchin, as to carry Wood, Water, *&c* but yet could never be brought to relinquish his native Wildness, which he retain'd to his dying-day; for he would often go into the Woods amongst the Bears, and freely keep company with them without any fear, or harm done him, being, as was suppos'd, constantly acknowledg'd for their Fosterling (1: 349).

In this account it becomes apparent that the feral child was not so much imagined to be

deprived of human nature, but was thought to have adopted by default the nature of another kind of animal. For instance, the child is not seen as being without language, rather he employs a language which is familiar to the bears. His displacement within the human community, his roughness, maladroitness, and wild incomprehensibility are recompensed by an almost magical belonging in the company of the bears. With the bears, his sub-human status, signalled most clearly by his becoming a gift - a means of exchange between a king and a politician - is healed into a relationship which is free of fear and coercion.

At the close of his brief discussion of these accounts, which form merely a brief interlude in a work primarily devoted to political and historical matters, Connor declares that perhaps "the History of *Romulus* and *Remus* is not so fabulous as it is generally conjectured to be" (1: 350). Leaving these stories, he remarks that such things touch on "Philosophical Matters", and alludes to his own discussion of innate Ideas in *Medicina Mystica*. However, Connor effectively passes up the chance of initiating the philosophical discussion on the subject, an opportunity which was not grasped until the late 1720's, and the discovery of Peter the Wild Boy.

CHAPTER TWO

MERE NATURE: THE CASE OF PETER THE WILD BOY

Part One - Peter, the Wild Boy

The case of Peter the Wild Boy provides the first major literary treatment of a feral child in English Literature. As is the case with most accounts of feral children, the facts of the boy's discovery and history are enmeshed in a web of contradictions. The boy was discovered in the woods near Hamelen either in July 1725, or around Christmas of the same year. However, the December dating might well be a mythic interpolation, as we shall go on to discuss in a later chapter. The boy was either found sucking milk from a cow in the fields, or roaming wild in the forests. He was naked, tanned, black-haired, and apparently between twelve and fifteen years of age. It was said at first that the boy lived purely on a diet of herbs and nuts (in some accounts, grass and moss), lacked the power of speech, and could climb trees as swiftly, and with as much skill, as a four-footed animal. He was taken in by the House of Correction at Zell, and brought from there by the Intendant to the court of King George I at Hanover, where he was presented to the

king at Herenhausen.

In the spring of 1726, he was brought to England at the request of the future Queen Caroline, then the Princess of Wales, and placed according to her wishes under the care of Dr. John Arbuthnot, the Scottish physician and friend of Swift, Gay, and Pope. For a year or so, the boy became a London celebrity. He lived at court, and was visited by numerous notables, including Jonathan Swift. The existence of the child provoked popular interest: a wax effigy of Peter was exhibited in The Strand, and a "half-length figure of him was for many years exhibited at Mrs. Salmon's, in Fleet-street" (Urban, 1785: 236). After less than a year Arbuthnot abandoned his education, and with fashionable interest waning in the fate of the boy, he was given to the care of a Mrs. Titchbourn, a member of the Queen's household. Mrs. Titchbourn, being used to spend her summer holidays at the house of James Fenn, a yeoman farmer, entrusted the boy to the Fenns at Haxter's End Farm, Broadway, near Berkhamstead. A sizeable pension was awarded to the family to provide for Peter's upkeep. Since he was, at first, in the habit of wandering off and getting lost, he was fitted with a collar on which was written: "Peter the Wild Man from Hanover. Whoever will bring him to Mr. Fenn at Berkhamstead, Hertfordshire, shall be paid for their trouble".

Peter lived at Haxter's End for thirty years, at the end of which time he was taken to Broadway Farm with John Fenn's brother, staying on there after this brother's death with his successor, Farmer Brill. In 1751, he briefly ran away from the farm with the following results:

> *October 27.* was a terrible fire in *Norwich*, which consumed part of the city bridewell, and several other houses. Peter the wild youth, who had stray'd from his keeper in *Hertfordshire*, and was committed to this bridewell as a sturdy vagrant, was with difficulty got away, seeming more to wonder at the fire, than to apprehend any danger, and would probably

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> have perished like a horse in the flames. By his behaviour, and want of speech, he seems to be more of the Ouran Outang species than of the human. Soon after the keeper coming to the knowledge of the advertisement where his elopement was mentioned, restored him back to the person to whose care he had been committed by the late queen (Urban, 1752: 522).

The comparison of Peter with an "Ouran Outang" has resonances which I will explore in the following chapter. In June 1782, Peter was visited by Lord Monboddo, who was to write about him in his six volume work, *Antient Metaphysics* (Edinburgh: 1779-99). Peter died in February 1785 and was buried at Northchurch. He never acquired language.

Arbuthnot was seriously ill in the September of 1725 with "an imposthumation of the bowels" (Aitken, 1892: 108). However, by October 1725 he was sufficiently recovered to invite Swift to visit his old friends in England. Swift, who was in the process of completing *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) (Harmondsworth: 1967), responded favourably to the invitation of his friend, and arrived in England in April 1726.

In the mean time, Arbuthnot had been appointed the guardian of Peter the Wild Boy at the special request of Caroline, the Princess of Wales. Arbuthnot had been Queen Anne's physician, but had lost his post on the accession of George I. His appointment by Caroline was partly a political move, a way of granting favour to one of those opposition Tories who moved in the circle of the Prince of Wales.

In April 1726, Swift arrived in England and was introduced to the Princess of Wales by Arbuthnot:

> She received him with her usual graciousness, and Swift at once gave a taste of his quality: he had been informed, he said, that she loved to see odd persons, and that having sent for a Wild Boy from Germany, she had a curiosity to see a Wild Dean from Ireland (Taylor, 1933: 271).

On 16 April 1726, Swift wrote to Thomas Tickell from the Prince of Wales's court in London:

> This night I saw the wild Boy, whose arrivall here hath been the subject of our Talk this fortnight. He is in the Keeping of Dr. Arbuthnot, but the King and Court were so entertained with him, that the Princess could not get him till now. I can hardly think him wild in the Sense they report him (Williams, 1963, 3: 128).

In this remark two facts emerge: firstly, that the boy was seen as an object of envy between the courts of the King and the Prince of Wales; and secondly, that Swift entertained doubts about the history of the boy. Both these suppositions might influence our reading of the literature surrounding the boy. If the pamphlets concerning Peter did originate in Arbuthnot's and Swift's circle, we might imagine they possessed some political motivation as part of the "war of the wits" against Walpole, though a reading of the pamphlets does not bear this out. Swift's doubts about the boy lead us into more ambiguous territory. That he did not consider the boy "wild" in the sense reported of him, does not necessarily suggest that he therefore doubted the veracity of the whole story. Even if he did entertain such doubts, this would not automatically invalidate his making use of the wild boy in a satiric pamphlet. In any case, Swift's letter certainly demonstrates an intense, if brief, interest in the boy and his story.

We know very little about Arbuthnot's involvement with the child. Unlike later cases of feral children there is little record of Arbuthnot's methods in teaching the child, presumably as a result of a lack of significant interest in these educational details. All we know of Arbuthnot's method in attempting to teach the boy language is that it was done "by teaching him the Use of his Lips and Mouth in uttering the Letters of the Alphabet A.B.C.D. and so on, & then to join them together" (*An Enquiry*, 1726A: 3). That this rudimentary method proved fruitless may not be too surprising. We read that Arbuthnot

was somewhat strict in his dealings with Peter:

> He has all the Passions of Mind like us, and is affraid of his Tutor, who keeps him under, & corrects him by striking his Legs with a broad Leather Strap, to keep him in awe (*An Enquiry*, 1726A: 3).

Despite these methods, we know that Peter was generally of a "merry Disposition frequently laughing" (*ibid*, 3) and that Arbuthnot gained at least some limited success in his training:

> What he has hitherto learned, is by Rote, as any dumb Creature is taught to fetch and carry: So at coming towards Persons his Tutor (*who calls him* Peter) bids him make a Bow, upon which he kisses his Fingers, and makes a Bow, he readily enough doing what his Tutor bids him (*ibid*, 4).

The veracity of these vignettes, most probably coming from the pen of a quack doctor, may well be doubted. However they provide the only glimpses of Peter's education that we have.

I have been able to trace seven pamphlets written about Peter the Wild Boy in the two years 1726-7, of which six belong to 1726, and one to 1727.[1] The order of publication is confused; however internal evidence does suggest some kind of sequential relation between the texts. Probably the first to be published was *The Most Wonderful Wonder that ever appear'd to the Wonder of the British Nation* (London: 1726), followed by *It Cannot Rain but it Pours: or London strow'd with Rarities* (London: 1726a). We know these were published between April and July 1726, since Defoe refers to them in *Mere Nature Delineated*, which was published in July 1726. *It Cannot Rain but it Pours*

was certainly published after 5 May, since it makes reference to the new Italian singer, Faustina, whose sensational London debut was on that date. *The Manifesto of Lord Peter* (London: 1726) follows *The Most Wonderful Wonder* and (probably) *It Cannot Rain*, while *An Enquiry How the Wild Youth, Lately taken in the Woods near* Hanover *(and now brought over to* England*) could be there left, and by what Creature he could be suckled, nursed, and brought up* (London: 1726) was probably published after Defoe's text. A pamphlet entitled *Vivitur* Ingenio was published at some time after 5 May 1726 - though it stands slightly outside the concerns of the five other pamphlets of that year. For this reason it is hard to place it within the order of publication of these texts. *The Devil to Pay at St. James's* (London: 1727) was published after 11 June, 1727, between the death of George I and the coronation of George II.[2]

The authorship of the pamphlets is difficult to determine, particularly in view of the ascription of some of these texts to Swift and Arbuthnot. Attacks by Defoe and the author of *The Manifesto of Lord Peter* suggest that, although Swift may not have been responsible for *The Most Wonderful Wonder* and *It Cannot Rain but it Pours*, he was popularly supposed to have been their author. Certainly the author of these two pamphlets most probably knew *Gulliver's Travels*. The dates of publication in turn limit this readership to Pope, Swift, Bolingbroke, Arbuthnot, and possibly Gay.[3]

While an ethical and philosophical earnestness characterises Defoe's text, the author of the "Swiftian" pamphlets displays intellectual irreverence and satiric humour. This humour could be characteristic of either Swift or Arbuthnot, though the kindliness of its tone might encourage some to rule out its attribution to Swift. The jokiness of the "Swiftian" pamphlets does not preclude their also being essentially serious. They may be codas to the savage indignation of *Gulliver's Travels*. The question then is: are they final

responses by Swift to the themes of his great contemporaneous work in a lighter and looser vein, prompted by a sympathetic consideration of his friend's wild student? Or are they something in the manner of a preliminary interpretative response to a reading of Swift's work, particularly to the unsettling procedures of the fourth voyage?

The pamphlets on Peter allow a division into five sets of response. The "Swiftian" pamphlets offer a castigation of the civilised from the "privileged" position of someone close to animality and so outside the realm of civilisation - though this position is consistently undermined by irony. In direct response to this, *The Manifesto of Lord Peter* presents a comic mockery of the "savage" and of the idealisation of the state of nature. The comedy is presented through an enumeration of the qualities Peter looks for in a wife. These include everything from strong teeth, a loud and shrill voice, recalcitrance, wilfulness, and unregulated movements, to a disregard for time, money, and education. *The Devil to Pay at St. James's* is a straightforward and exuberant skit on Peter. The *Enquiry as to How the Wild Youth* attempts to describe the history of the boy and to satisfy the curiosity of the public. Like *An Enquiry*, Defoe's *Mere Nature* functions to spread information from the court to the middle class. It also shares a tone of practical interest in discovering the truth of the story. However, *An Enquiry* is primarily interested in the origins of the boy - how he got to be in the woods, and how he could manage to live there - whereas *Mere Nature* moves beyond the simple presentation of facts and adds to them both speculation on the meanings of the boy's story, and a satire on the court.

The pamphlet, *Vivitur Ingenio*, consists, as its full title describes, of a collection of "*Elegant, Moral, Satirical, and Comical Thoughts On Various Subjects: as, Love and Gallantry, Poetry and Politicks, Religion and History, &c*". The piece is supposed to have been collected from the graffiti written in chalk on the boards of the Mall in St.

James's Park - a practice which may also be referred to in *The Devil to Pay at St. James's*. The supposed author of these thoughts is a "WILD MAN, who stiles himself *Secretary to the Wilderness there*; and is the reputed Father of PETER the WILD BOY, lately brought from Hanover" (titlepage).

A series of preoccupations emerge from these pamphlets, illuminating the pre-Rousseauist idea of the feral child. He especially becomes a focus for a series of interconnected debates concerning a human condition in which surface appearances exist without any interior depth. In this way, Peter is seen as an animal, a human in bestial form, and also as a human-machine, having a human shape but lacking the essential guarantee of the human: that is, the possession of a soul. Intriguingly, this existence at the surface is frequently linked in the pamphlets to the English aristocracy, and also to the idea of folly. Peter can embody the beast, the aristocrat, and the fool in turn, by virtue of the absence of a soul. Finally, the pamphlets also link Peter with the current vogue for opera. I argue that this itself is another manifestation of the anxiety and wonder created by the contemplation of a mere human surface. For reasons of space, I confine myself here to two aspects of this complex representation. Through a reading of Defoe's pamphlet on Peter, I explore how the absence of the soul and the lack of language is presented in that text. Defoe's reflections on the absolute materiality that such a condition embodies prepare us for the later understanding of the feral child, an understanding which begins with, and returns to, the puzzling nature of silence.

Part Two - Souls: the Feral Child as a Body Without a Soul

Defoe's *Mere Nature Delineated* has either been dismissed by his critics or simply ignored. In *Memoirs of the Life and Times of Daniel De Foe* (London: 1830), Walter Wilson devotes six pages to the subject, the majority of which are given over to a summary of the work. William Lee's two-volume biography of Defoe (London: 1869) considers the whole case to be an imposture on a gullible public (1869, 1: 414). Thomas Wright's biography of 1894 is even more dismissive. He regards Defoe's motives for writing the text as exclusively pecuniary, therefore accounting for its supposedly perfunctory nature, and declares that he exhibits "a more common-sense view of the subject than his contemporaries" (Wright, 1894: 341). Both points are debatable. In the first place, though not written *exclusively* for money, the tract was certainly written at great speed, as were nearly all Defoe's works, but it is precisely the speed of composition which gives the work one of its chief sources of interest: that is, the sense of witnessing the author discovering what he thinks about and finds important in the case. In the second place, it is apparent that in fact Defoe was unusual in taking the case seriously - his contemporaries plainly regarded it as a joke. Wright goes on to suggest that Defoe's speculations on language in the text amount to "a little bit of fooling" (1894: 341). Wright's parting shot - that Defoe only stops short of calling the boy an idiot as this would court unpopularity - misses the point entirely. That Peter was an idiot was both a popular charge and one that Defoe specifically shields the boy from. Lee's comment that *Mere Nature* is Defoe's most speculative work is nearer the mark (1869, 1: 414). The most recent biographies of Defoe have failed to mention his involvement in the case at all.

Defoe's pamphlet was published on 23 July 1726, and sold at the price of one shilling and six pence. The title-page reads as follows: *Mere NATURE Delineated: or, A BODY without a SOUL. Being OBSERVATIONS Upon the Young FORESTER Lately Brought to Town from GERMANY. With Suitable APPLICATIONS. Also, A Brief Dissertation upon the Usefulness and Necessity of FOOLS, whether Political or Natural.* Little is known about Defoe's involvement with Peter, though Lee conjectures that Defoe had visited the boy prior to writing his text (1869, 1: 413).

The earnest quality of Defoe's text sets it apart from the other pamphlets on Peter. He remarks early on that the boy should not be the occasion for laughter, but for pity: "A Body without the due Exercise of a Soul, is certainly an Object of great Compassion, and so I treat him all along" (Defoe, 1726b: iv). At the end of the text he asks forgiveness for using the boy as an example, reformulating his nature to his own literary ends. Nevertheless, he declares that a proper request for forgiveness can be forestalled until Peter himself is able to require it of him (Defoe, 1726b: 121). In any case the text's assumption of compassion as its guiding virtue is in part an antagonistic gesture against Swift, the supposed author of *The Most Wonderful Wonder*, and so a means of distinguishing itself from Swift's style and politics. Defoe distances himself from the apparent cruelty of the "Swiftian" pamphlets. However, the actual texture of Defoe's text differs radically from this self-portrayal. Defoe mixes, as he himself puts it, the "buffoon" and the "solemn" (1726b: 29). The passages of buffoonery occur at moments when the text seems to become anxious about its own intense seriousness; it retreats from its speculations, and falls back upon rote satire on the court, revealing both fears for the attention of its readers and worry at the directions in which its ideas have led it. Later, however, it is the humour rather than the seriousness which Defoe appears to be anxious

over:

> Some People may, perhaps, maliciously suggest, that this Tract is designed as a Jest upon the Youth who seems to be so much the Subject of it, and upon the making his Appearance at Court so publick, upon so mean a Foundation; but as every Man ought to be understood according to his own declar'd Meaning, and has a Right to explain himself, and declare that Meaning in express Terms; so, to prevent all such false Constructions, I take that Liberty, which, I think, I have an undoubted Right to, and explain myself in the Manner following (Defoe, 1726b: 117).

Defoe's worries over the unstable meaning of his book, and his fears that it would be misread, might allude to an instability within the text itself, a disjunction or disruption of meaning produced within the nature of the feral child and the literary strategies employed to represent that child.

Before he is anything, Peter is first and foremost to Defoe a human being apparently without a soul:

> The World has, for some Time, been entertained, or amused rather, with a strange Appearance of a Thing in human Shape; but, for ought that yet appears, very little else, and in some sense, *as it were*, without a Soul; for *Idem est non esse, & non apparere*; Not to be, and not to be in Exercise, is much the same to him; as Not to be, and not to appear by its Operation, is much the same to us (Defoe, 1726b: 1).

Peter embodies "mere nature". He is entirely, supremely, and exclusively natural - as it were, the quintessence of the natural.[4] If Peter is putatively without a soul, he must be defined in terms of what he lacks, and, conversely, some definition of the soul itself must also be attempted - a definition which remains problematic within Defoe's book. The text is thus concerned with the gap between two intertwined objects of comprehension: between Peter himself, in his mere nature, and that which defines our humanity, the invisible essence of the soul.

Scepticism about the existence of a soul had existed in England at least since the late sixteenth century.[5] The most influential models of the soul were the Aristotelian and

Christian doctrines. In *De Anima*, Aristotle described the soul as a principle of life found in an individual. The soul is expressed within the process of the realisation of the self, the natural end of that process being its "entelechy". Soul and body are inseparable, yet the soul is immaterial. There are three kinds of soul: the nutritive, common to vegetables, animals, and men; the sensitive, common to animals and men; and the rational soul which was uniquely and definitively human. Each develops towards God, moving through a hierarchy gradated between Formless Matter and Matterless Form (God).

In *The Dumb Philosopher* (London: 1719), an anonymous writer (previously thought to be Defoe) presents the orthodox Christian idea of the soul through the words of Dickory Cronke, the mute philosopher of the book's title:

> I most firmly believe that it was the eternal Will of God, and the Result of his infinite Wisdom, to create a World, and for the Glory of his Majesty to make several sorts of Creatures in Order and Degree one after another: That is to say, *Angels* or *pure immortal Spirits*: Men consisting of immortal Spirits and Matter, having rational and sensitive Souls. Brutes having mortal and sensitive Souls, and mere Vegetatives, such as Trees, Plants, *&c.* And these Creatures, so made, do (as it were) clasp the higher and lower World together (*Dumb Philosopher*, 1719: 32-33).[6]

Humanity's place in the universe is here defined through the nature of its soul. The Augustinian concept of the soul follows both Plato and Aristotle, while re-formulating that concept in terms of a narrative. The soul becomes the intrinsic self bound up within a story of its own corruption and potential for salvation: it represents a hidden self revealed in, and dependent upon, the actions of the person within the world of appearances, though it remains hidden from that world. Only human beings have rational souls: it is the possession of such a soul that defines us as human.

By the late seventeenth century, the Aristotelian definitions and Christian doctrines were being challenged by the formulations of Descartes, and by a new materialism.

Descartes, of course, begins with the questioning of what is real, doubting all until drawn down to the irreducible reality of consciousness. Descartes and his disciples maintained that the material body was simply a type of machine, within which in the human being is a consciousness identified with the concept of the self and of the soul:

> The thinking mind and extended matter are in every respect the opposite of one another. Matter, the *res extenso*, is dead and infinitely divisible. Mind, the *res cogitans*, is living, and being unextended, indivisible. The Psyche has no spatial existence, the external world no life (Ellis, 1940:150).

Descartes' dualistic distinction between an animal body of pure matter likened to a machine and a human soul of an incorporeal nature was partly a product of Christian apologetics. Yet this distinction split the Christian unity of body and soul. The external world could be seen as dead and mechanistic, its living meaning concealed and internal.

One natural end of Descartes' line of thought can be witnessed in La Mettrie's *L'Homme Machine* (1748) (London: 1750). La Mettrie moves towards concluding that the division in Descartes is a false one, and that it is probable that consciousness is not distinct from the machine of the body, but is rather a product of its mechanics, itself material in origin. Defoe's representation of Peter hesitates before this final step, yet it nonetheless imagines Peter as though he were a Cartesian animal. Like the deaf, the blind, the mad, the melancholic, and the idiotic in La Mettrie's account, Peter embodies an animal and mechanistic materiality. He manifests a behaviouristic model of humankind, though with this proviso: unlike other animals, humanity exhibits no behaviour which is natural to it. Peter exists like a discarded puppet, a broken machine, or a clockwork toy.

Defoe's writing on Peter forms part of this debate on the nature of the soul, and is significant therefore as much for its assumptions as for its uncertainties. However, that the definition of the soul was no longer unquestioned, but required defence and

reformulation is apparent from Defoe's tract. Defoe argues that it is necessary to believe in the soul's existence:

> We are not easily able to conceive of a Human Body, without any such Thing as a reasonable Soul infused at its first being form'd, unless we had ever seen or read of such a Creature in the World before, or unless we had a Method in Science, to obtain a Mathematical, or Anatomical System or Description of the Soul itself; that it was a Substance capable of Measurement, and having a Locality of Dimensions and Parts ascribed to it; but, as we define Soul by Rational Powers, Understanding, and Will, Affection, Desires, Imagining, and reflecting Operations, and the like, we are, *I say*, at some Difficulty in suggesting a human Body in Life, without those Operations (Defoe, 1726b: 23).

The child's apparent mere physicality would seem to deny the immateriality of the soul. Yet the child's physical presence undermines the idea of the non-existence of the soul within it, seeing that it is so difficult to imagine a human being living without the "operations" of a soul. The body, in its apparent identity with the human, proves more evidential than the invisible soul, since the soul's existence only appears through actions without which it is impossible to imagine a specifically human life. Peter's visible humanity therefore acts against the assertion of the text that he is without a soul, and in fact Defoe, at times, has to concede him a human soul:

> This, I think then, is the Sum of what we may say of this Creature, *viz.* That he has a Soul, though we see very little of the ordinary Powers of a Soul acting in him, any more than are to be discerned in the more sagacious Brutes; Now we deny the Capacities of a Soul, such as Reflection and Retention, Understanding, Inquiring, Reasoning, and the like, to the Brute Creatures; and we say, That to allow it them, would tend to destroy the Principles of natural Religion, and to overturn the Foundation of the Divine Sovereignty and Government in the World: On the contrary, we see him, as I observed before, in a State of MERE NATURE, acting below the Brutes, and yet we must grant him a Soul: He has a Body, in its Shape Human, the Organick Parts Anatomically, we believe, the same as Human; he acts the Powers and Motions of sensitive Life, and of rational Life, alike, as if they were confused and huddled together undistinguished, and just as Nature directs in other Creatures; but he is a Ship without a Rudder, not steer'd or managed, or directed by any Pilot; no, hardly by that faithful Pilot called Sense, the Guide of Beasts

(Defoe, 1726b: 23-24).

The soul that resides in Peter (and here Defoe's text reveals a distinct Aristotelian influence) is therefore immanent, locked up within him and unable to develop into a fully human soul. This is not the only point at which Defoe reveals that his concept of the soul relies on the definitions of Aristotle. At the beginning of the text, he remarks that Peter "lived a vegetative Life ... that he acted below Brutal Life, hardly a Sensitive, and not at all a Rational" (Defoe, 1726b: 2-3). The reliance on Aristotle is revealing, as it points towards the developmental idea of the human, which was to dominate later discussions of the feral child. The natural progresses into the human through a series of gradations inspired by "the Laws of Nature " (1726b: 58). Peter represents the human being stuck at the level of the natural due to an inability to pass through the necessary gradations (Defoe, 1726b: 58).

It is possible that Defoe's discussion of Peter's lack of a soul forms part of a discourse which would aim to preserve the idea of the soul as the defining essence of the human, an invisible ground of being from which human life assumes coherence and meaning. Implicit in Defoe's analysis is the idea that if there was no such thing as a soul, then all humans would be like Peter: mute, ignorant, isolated, and bestial. Our humanity would not emerge from the metaphysical origin of the spirit, but from the materialistic and bestial ground of the natural. In this sense our very difference from Peter is itself one strong argument for the existence of the soul. Defoe's formulation of Peter as the exemplar of mere nature, of human life deprived of that soul which differentiates it from the natural, can thus be configured as an attempt to argue for the soul. The alternative reading it fends off was to become the staple in considerations of the feral child: that is, the human is exactly the merely natural, who must be acculturated into becoming a

realized human being. For Defoe, Peter's distinction from humanity is constituted as a fact of his being: he even looks at his body with surprise when it does not reveal actual physical differences from civilised humanity.

At other times, Defoe explores the mechanistic product that results from removing the soul, itself an idea bound up with Descartes' notion of the animal as machine:

> His Want of Speech, assists very much to keep him just in the same State of Nature, that he was in when brought first among us; and I do not find that he makes much Improvement in any thing, nor can his Teachers, as I understand, give much Account yet, whether they think he is capable of any Instructions or no: This shews us, what a strange Machine the Body of a Man is, that any little Breach in the whole Contexture, interrupts the whole Motion; nay, which is really a miserable Testimony of our Infelicity, it goes farther, and the least Disorder of the Parts, even of the mere *Apparatus*, as it may be called, made by Nature for the Reception of a Soul, renders that Soul unhappily useless to itself, unable to act, unfurnished with Tools to work with, imprisoned and chained, and, in a Word, fit for nothing (Defoe, 1726b: 59).

Here Defoe plays upon the Cartesian notion of the body as machine in order to show that machine acting against the soul. The materiality of the body becomes supreme, overcoming that incorporeal essence which might have humanised it.

In the metaphor of the human as beast and machine, with its suggestions of vulnerability and weakness, Defoe offers us an image of human origins as unregenerate and despicable when conceived of in terms not of the soul, but of the soul's absence or incarceration. The human becomes a non sequitur, a thing deprived of those qualities which constitute its essence. The knowledge of this soul-less "self" is fraught and contradictory. At times this bestial origin is privileged: like many observers of the feral child, Defoe imagined that observation would reveal characteristics of the truly human, whether in discovering primal modes of thought (prior to language) (Defoe, 1726b: 39) or in the operation of the senses (1726b: 33). So the human without a soul exhibits both

an "essential" and an incomplete human nature. It represents one defining point of what it is to be human, but is still an origin from which the truly human, the metaphysically human, cannot emerge.

Through its concentration upon the soul as the incorporeal site of the human, Defoe's text becomes a quest for the evidences of such a soul. These evidences lean upon other definitions of the human, so that Peter may be said to have a soul in so far as he is seen to be capable of laughter, or rational thought, or social life. However, each of these defining evidences appear on closer scrutiny to be insufficient: the proof appears to recede the more closely it is examined. For instance, Peter's humanity is briefly posited in terms of his ability to laugh (1726b: 19-20). However, after a brief digression noting that this would allow monkeys to be counted as human, Defoe rescinds this temporary elevation to the fully human: Peter's laughter is seen as unmeaning and hollow. His laughter is then linked to that of the aristocrats' who self-consciously imitate him. Rather than establishing his humanity, the kinship of this kind of laughter draws the aristocrats down to the level of "*Meer Nature*" (Defoe, 1726b: 20).

The question of the evidence for the soul shades subtly into an elucidation of how the soul might be formed. Curiously, this question of the formation of the soul takes us back to the theme of exhibition, as already mentioned in the account of Bernard Connor. Peter as an exhibited curiosity is the object of the gaze of others. However, while being observed, Peter himself is not observing: the sense is of a person watched without reciprocating the gaze of the watcher:

> And, indeed, to take him as he appears to be, he is a Subject of Observation, and affords more Speculation to us that look on him, than, I believe, all the World, with the infinite Variety of Objects which it presents to his Eye, affords to him.
> Nature seem to be *to him*, like a fine Picture to a blind Man, ONE

> UNIVERSAL BLANK, as Mr. *Milton* very beautifully expresses it; he sees the Surface of it, but seems to receive no Impression from it of one Kind, or of another: He looks on the infinite Variety, with a kind of equal Unconcerndness, as if every Object were alike, or that he knew not how to distinguish between Good or Evil, Pleasant or Unpleasant (Defoe, 1726b: 27).

Peter's "blindness" is of a peculiar kind. He sees the world of appearances without being able to discriminate among them. This flattening out of the world leads to indifference. Peter exists in a state of perceptual detachment, the result of standing outside the frame of the human artifice and therefore seeing things deprived of the idea of formalised presence which ascribes to them individuality, interest, and beauty. This viewpoint is for once seen by Defoe as not privileged but disadvantaged, for its unreciprocating gaze looks blankly at a world without criteria formed by which it may be valued. Later in the text this indifference to the world is equated unequivocally with the soul's immanence, locked up in itself, and requiring the process of education to draw it into the world of appearances. Without this education the world is a blank:

> He has Eyes, but knows not what he sees; knows not what to call any thing he looks on, or what Uses any thing he sees are appropriated to: When he sees it Rain, he does not know that it is Water, *much less* that this Water cools, refreshes, and fructifies the Earth; *still less*, that the Plants and Fruits would not grow without it [...] a compleat Ignorance possesses his Mind, he knows not the Use of his own Passions; he knows not the proper Objects of Grief or Joy, Fear or Anger, much less the Meaning of them; he has no Taste of Knowledge, and, with *Solomon*'s Fool, has no Delight in Understanding ... (1726b: 64).

Here Defoe links the lack in Peter's perception of the world, its blankness, to a cognitive deficiency established in the absence of knowledge itself, so that Defoe is forced into manifest absurdities, such as declaring the boy would not know that rain is water. Moreover, and this is typical of the texts representing Peter, there is no sense here that an understanding independent of words might be valuable or enviable. Instead, Peter's

ignorance is conceived in terms of emptiness, absence, and the deadness of the unemotional. However, it is in *Mere Nature* that the privilege of being without words is first explored.

Defoe goes on to link this perceptual detachment with a type of moral defect. Just as Peter cannot distinguish among the appearances of the world, so he seems unable to distinguish among human actions:

> ... had he seen the late Mrs. *Hayes* burnt alive at a Stake, it would not have been at all any Surprize to him, or have given him any Ideas differing from a Dance on the *Theatre* (1726b: 33-34).

Lacking the ability to comprehend people as other subjects, Peter is seen as unable to imagine objective consequences for them. Human life appears to him as insubstantial and artificial as a play, albeit a play in which the stimulation of sympathy has been denied. Peter sees and hears in the same way that he laughs, that is, without being conscious of what he perceives. This lack of inward reflection denudes the world of appearance, which remains (in a Lockean sense) at the level of pure unmediated sensation.

In the absence of a reciprocating interest in others, Peter is reduced to the status of a mirror. Denied a subjectivity - or a soul - of his own, Peter exists as the other wherein his observers project themselves and constitute a sense of their own identity, through the formulation of Peter's difference. Peter's own identity remains a screen since the answering gaze which would designate an independent and reciprocal self fails to exist. He remains waiting to be called into being, "a Life wanting a Name to distinguish it ..." (Defoe, 1726b: 5).

Being stuck in the recurrent newness of the state of nature, Peter remains purely a surface. Defoe's text displays an unsettled perplexity in remaining at the surface, since it does not

manifest openness, but exhibits rather the condition of secrecy:

> If he has the ordinary Affections of human Soul, they must be seen at Nature's Leisure, and as she pleases to admit them to exert themselves; for at present we are able to make almost as little Judgment of him, as he can of us: This, in my opinion, is one of the most curious Things that belongs to him; I mean, as he now appears, that we can give no Account how, and by what secret Power the Faculties of his Soul are restrained, or withheld and lock'd up from Action, while yet they are, perhaps, in Being within, and reserved for a proper Season, when he shall be restored to himself (Defoe, 1726b: 28).

The surface is exposed but remains meaningless:

> As we see him in his ordinary Appearance, his Figure is, indeed, a little differing from what it was represented to be before; but he is still a naked Creature; though he has Cloaths on, his Soul is naked; he is but the Appearance or Shadow of a rational Creature, a kind of Spectre or Apparition; he is a great Boy in Breeches, that seems likely to be a Boy all his Days, and rather fit to have been dress'd in a Hanging-sleev'd Coat; and, if he is not a Fool, or Natural, or *Idiot*, or a Something that we generally understand by those Terms of Nature, we may be still at a Loss about him (Defoe, 1726b: 28).

Defoe's book acts out a dispute between knowledge and doubt, a dispute in which the only evidence is the paltry and unmeaning nature of the surface. The text seeks the certainty of rational knowledge, but finds itself continually cast into doubts, or led up paths of argument which end in the impossibility of knowledge. The end is only unverifiable conjecture: one recurrent word used in Defoe's text is "perhaps". On closer examination Defoe's statements of belief in certain ideas about Peter prove shifty and uncertain (Defoe, 1726b: 16). He is the "image" of mere nature; he is like a body without a soul: but these only suggest likenesses, and not identity. The only certainty is his being brought to England as "a Curiosity in Nature, for the Rareness of it worth enquiring into" (1726b: 16). Peter is human externally: internally he may be lacking the essentially human: "Guesses therefore at Outsides, will not reach the Case, *Fronti nulla fides*, The Face is not always an Index of the Mind ..." (Defoe, 1726b: 57).

So, although the surface is the only site at which Peter can be apprehended, because that site exists in insufficiency, doubt, and mystification, the incorporeal and invisible soul that he seems to lack in fact becomes the key to understanding the boy. Peter exists in terms of the thing which he does not fully possess. This soul becomes the invisible barrier between the human and the animal: Peter exists on that boundary, in both having and not having a soul (Defoe, 1726b: 23-4). He must possess a soul in order to reinstate again the essential difference of human beings from animals ("That to allow it [i.e. a soul] them, would tend to destroy the Principles of natural Religion, and to overturn the Foundation of the Divine Sovereignty and Government in the World" (Defoe, 1726b: 23)); but the counterpart to this is that his soul must actually be locked up, useless and unapparent, in order to maintain our difference from him.

Peter both resembles and does not resemble an animal. He is first seen "creeping on Hands and Knees, climbing Trees like a Cat, sitting on the Boughs like a Monkey" (1726b: 3), yet Defoe asserts that in fact he would seem to stand upright "as the Soul-informed Part of Mankind do" (1726b: 3). Here Peter's bodily posture manifests that he does possess a soul, *in potentia* at least, and that the nature of his body acts as a distinguishing fact separating his being from those of the four-legged animals. The body resists the loss of the soul by reason of its very shape:

> How much might be said here by Way of Excursion upon the happy Disposition of Man's Body? that, in Spight of a sullen Degeneracy in some Men, shewing their strong Inclination to turn Brutes, they are not really qualify'd for that great Accomplishment; that they can't throw off the Soul, or its Faculties, and that even the Body itself will not comply with it; when an obstinate Brutality seems to remain, the very Shape and Situation of their Microcosm rebels against the sordid Tyranny, forbids the stupid Attempt, and denies them the Honour of being Beasts in Form, and in the ordinary Functions of sensitive Life, whatever they will be in Practice. In a Word, they can't tread upon all Four; they can't run, gallop, leap, trot, *&c.* like the more sagacious and superior Brutes, the Horse, or

the Ass .. (Defoe, 1726b: 12).

As we have seen in the writings of Herder on the feral child, this insistence on the essential difference of the human based upon the fact of our uprightness had been a conventional part of debates on the relation between humans and animals since Plato's *Timaeus* (Thomas, 1984: 31).

That this difference resides in the observable materiality of the body would appear to give it extra strength. Defoe appears at times to move away from the single distinguishing fact of the soul to reasons less fraught with ambiguity. Defoe argues that without the rational soul the human body would prove insufficient to guarantee survival in the wilderness, "his Carcass left utterly destitute, is unqualified to live ..." (1726b: 7). Human inadequacy compares unfavorably with the animals' ability to deal with the rigours of nature:

> ... he cannot Burrow like the Rabbit, or earth himself in a Den like the Badger: They are warm and secure from the Weather, safe and preserved from their Enemies, in their Holes and Hollows under Ground; but the poor naked, tender-skin'd Brute of Human Kind, must have a House to keep him dry, Cloaths to keep him warm, and a Door to shut him in, or he is lost ... (1726b: 7).

However, Peter's very survival of his exposure manifests a human body which, despite its inherent weakness, manages to deny this characterisation of the human as being in a state of natural inadequacy.

In these ways the observable surface reality of the boy both acts against the single defining condition of his humanity - that is, the incorporeal soul - and enters into ambiguous relation with it. It can at times suggest the ineradicable presence of the soul (as in the fact of uprightness), or alternatively show that without the soul the human is in fact less than the animal (though this is *because* he is human). For the surface is of course

the substantial reality in which belief in Peter's humanity, and indeed his physical existence, resides: "for that there is such a Person, is visible, and he is to be seen every Day, all wild, brutal, and as Soul-less as he was said to be; acting MERE NATURE [...] This, I say, is evedent [*sic*], He is himself so far the miserable Evidence of the Fact" (1726b: 3).

Thrust back upon the evidence of the body as self, the text becomes an exploration of solitude. Peter's isolation is in itself one proof of the absence, or the dormancy, of a soul. His aversion to humankind (Defoe, 1726b: 21), and his desire to flee from company, is palpably strange to Defoe: by the time Itard was to write his case history this radical isolation was to seem enticing and even (through the unacknowledged influence of Rousseau) essentially human. Defoe depicts Peter's solitariness as an all but stubborn refusal to participate in the life of society:

> It would indeed be a terrible Satyr upon the present inspir'd Age, first to allow this Creature to have a Soul, and to have Power of thinking, qualify'd to make a right Judgment of Things, and then to see that under the Operation and Influence of that regular and well-order'd Judgment, he should see it reasonable to chuse to continue silent and mute, to live and converse with the Quadrupeds of the Forest, and retire again from human Society, rather than dwell among the inform'd Part of Mankind; for it must be confess'd he takes a *Leap in the Light*, if he has Eyes to see it, to leap from the Woods to the Court; from the Forest among Beasts, to the Assembly among the Beauties; from the Correction House at *Zell*, (where, at best, he had convers'd among the meanest of the Creation, *viz* the Alms-taking Poor, or the Vagabond Poor) to the Society of all the Wits and Beaus of the Age: The only Way that I see we have to come off of this Part, is to grant this Creature to be Soul-less, his Judgement and Sense to be in a State of Non-Entity, and that he has no rational Faculties to make the Distinction: But even that remains upon our Hands to prove (1726b: 22).

Defoe's text manifests here and elsewhere both satire directed against the Court and a radical ambivalence about the nature of isolation - an isolation which forms into a condition formulated in the interstices of fear and desire. As in Defoe's fictions, especially

Robinson Crusoe (1719) (Oxford: 1983), *Moll Flanders* (1722) (Harmondsworth: 1989), and *The Fortunate Mistress* (London: 1724), the subject of this text is a character existing in a state of isolation. Moll and Roxana's loneliness is a product of their social and economic existence: their isolation is the background against which the necessity for survival operates. In all three novels, this condition of solitude is played out against the encroachment upon the self of the other: in this way *Robinson Crusoe* acts out a dialectic of solipsism and relationship. A fear of the other acts against the terrible isolation of the individual. This receives its most dramatic treatment in the closing pages of *The Fortunate Mistress* as Roxana is pursued and plagued by Amy, the only person who might end Roxana's alienation. Woven into the processes of Defoe's fictions is the idea that the two greatest horrors of life are to be alone and not to be alone.

It may then be Peter's essential isolation which attracts Defoe to his story. Unlike Defoe's fictional heroes, he remains trapped in the condition of his solitude, and so embodies more clearly than any other of Defoe's characters the cost involved in such a perpetual isolation. What Defoe demonstrates is that this cost is the inability to be human, that humanity as such belongs within the framework of social relationships. Moreover, it renders the self lost within a radical alterity, precisely because it cannot conceive the otherness of others. This alterity manifests itself in the absence of the soul.

In not possessing a soul, Peter is linked to others who may share his condition. The text begins with an immediate digression on the question as to whether women have souls, and after weighing the evidence comes to the conclusion that many women are without them. That is both to ascribe the discourse of animality and savagery to women, and also to suggest a feminisation of Peter. Keith Thomas shows that discourse relating women to animals, and hence to bodies without souls can be found at both a popular and

academic level in the period (1984: 43). This is suggestive in considering Peter's place outside patriarchal government - both through his existence in the state of nature, and in so far as he has a mother, but no present father. The significance of the breast-feeding imagery that applies to stories of the feral child may therefore be that the child is shown to belong to a primarily matrilineal family: it is not until Kipling that there is a mention of a male animal being involved in the rearing of a feral child. For Peter, the maternal world is then forsaken for the patriarchal domain of civilised society: his guardian and educator is, of course, male.

Previously, in *Robinson Crusoe*, Defoe explored the distance of the civilised man from the savage, even while he is immersed in the domain of savagery. Now, in the pamphlet on Peter, Defoe was to re-examine this situation in reverse, depicting a savage uniquely distant from the civilised, even while living among the finest exemplars of the civilised world. (However, this is double-edged, since Defoe is just as interested in showing the world of the court as hypocritical, vain, and shallow). In *Robinson Crusoe* the hero's distance from the savage maintains itself through the experience of solitude - a condition which might appear to embody one aspect of the state of nature. In fact, Crusoe's isolation is not properly a return to the Lockean state of nature, but rather a means of testing the internalised condition of civilisation within the individual self. Crusoe tames, orders, and cultivates wild nature into a pattern made conformable to the needs of a human being: he even persists in the ordering of time (though he makes a miscalculation in doing so) and attempts the reclamation and cultivation of his own Man Friday.

Robinson Crusoe embodies a narrative in which events, being providential and therefore outside the order of nature, contain a meaning which is in its essence inaccessible to the merely natural:

> ... it was a Testimony to me, how the meer Notions of Nature, though they will guide reasonable Creatures to the Knowledge of a God, and of a Worship or Homage due to the supreme Being, of God as the Consequence of our Nature; yet nothing but divine Revelation can form the Knowledge of *Jesus Christ*, and of a Redemption purchas'd for us, of a Mediator of the new Covenant, and of an Intercessor, at Revelation from Heaven, can form these in the Soul, and that therefore the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*; I mean, the Word of God, and the Spirit of God promis'd for the Guide and Sanctifier of his People, are the absolutely necessary Instructors of the Souls of Men, in the saving Knowledge of God, and the Means of Salvation (Defoe, 1983: 219).[7]

The providential aspects of Crusoe's story are present in detail throughout the text: among other things they provide a convenient explanation for all those fortunate occurrences which allow the narrative to proceed happily. However, the broad revelation of the plot is the individual's salvation from loneliness, and a return to the social. As in the moment when Poll's voice wakes Crusoe, giving back to him the exclamations of his self-pity, and standing in relation to him as a "sociable creature" (Defoe, 1983: 143), the story draws Crusoe out of isolation into relationship with an other. Defoe replays this situation in *Mere Nature*, as the isolated boy is brought into the social domain. However, in Peter's case the entry into society is blocked by that which he carries with him, a life in which the subjective self cannot be formed.

This difference also manifests itself in the providential or religious themes of the tract. Religious concern is not confined to Defoe's tract: it is present also in the "Swiftian" pamphlets, most notably at the end of *It Cannot Rain* (1726a: 10). In the pamphlets on Peter, the religious theme emerges in two ways: firstly, as a means of discussing the nature of innocence; and secondly, as anxiety for the condition of the wild boy's eternal soul.

In the first instance, Defoe represents Peter as existing in an unfallen state, from which the fall would be initiated by the coming into consciousness occasioned in the

acquisition of language. To become conscious of the self entails the inevitability of corruption:

> And here a Speculation of infinite Force and Signification occurs to me, namely, how impossible it is now, in the Nature of the Thing, for this Youth to attain to the full Exercise of the Faculties and Powers of a reasoning Soul, without taking in, at the same time, and with the same Instruction, all the wicked Part too! (Defoe, 1726b: 43).

In this way, Peter begins to assume the symbolic status of a representation of "mankind". In being Adamic, his condition repeats the situation of us all: his becoming fully human would entail his departure from the state of innocence. His otherness here stands for a nostalgic image of the self as once existing in pre-lapsarian ignorance. This assertion of Peter's pre-social belonging to a world where sin is impossible, since consciousness has not been formed (he is as guiltless as an animal) is one of the very few places in the text where envy of the boy is found. I consider this theme in more detail in the last section of this chapter. In a later discussion of the same question, Defoe links this inability to do evil to the condition of the animal and also of the human infant. This consideration of Peter's essential innocence shades into jokes about his possibly being Catholic, and ends in fears regarding the appropriateness of his being baptised. It is noteworthy that the consideration of Peter's Adamic state immediately prompts one of the reiterated expressions of anxiety regarding the fear of boring the reader - an anxiety perhaps occasioned as much by a sense of disturbance about the content of what is being said, as by fears of straying into too great a seriousness. Once more we are forced to the conclusion that Defoe's discourse, or the form of the tract itself, was not adequate for the expression of what he began to feel might be said about Peter.

Defoe's works have traditionally been seen in terms influenced by Tawney and Weber. We have grown used to connecting the Protestant image of the solitary self

before God with the capitalist concept of society as composed of atomised individuals motivated by self-interest and responsible for their own survival.[8] The text of *Mere Nature*, without contradicting this reading of Defoe, nonetheless does complicate this view of his works.

I have remarked upon the failure in the text to live up to its own attempts at seriousness, its reiterated lapsing into embarrassment concerning its own speculations. However, Defoe's manifest fascination with the subject marks out *Mere Nature* from the other representations of Peter. It is possible that this interest derives from Defoe's endorsement of the new political and economic conditions of the 1720's - Swift and Arbuthnot being essentially opposed to Walpole and the constituency of the new capitalism that Walpole represented.

Defoe's text embodies the conjunction of the idea of the self as commodity and of the self as individual soul. Peter, denied the status of full humanity through the absence or non-appearance of a soul, yet possesses the selfhood of commodity, "the extraordinary intrinsick Value of him ..." (Defoe, 1726b: 35). Defoe's texts exhibit the rise of economic man: an individual alive in a world of loosened hierarchical bonds - a world in fact where the only distinction viable is between the human and the non-human. The "savage" and the feral child occupy a place of ambivalence in this opposition, being both human and yet inferior to the "more human" civilised individual. Their closeness to, or actual belonging in the merely natural, mark them out as separate and equivocally human. In terms of the commodity value of the self, the feral child and the "savage" exemplify a state of nature which is opposed to the social realm, and yet, through the disintegration of that realm in the atomisation of the market, uncannily like its most modern manifestation. However, the feral child is outside the bonds constituted by money, and though his person is a

commodity (a commodity established in exhibition) he is therefore outside the realm in which such social and economic relations acquire the ability to appear in semi-permanence.

In *Some Reflections on the Present State of the Nation* (London: A. Millar, 1753) Bolingbroke was to compare the world of laisser-faire capitalism with the image of humanity in Hobbes's state of nature.[9] Isaac Kramnick's *Bolingbroke and his Circle* (Cambridge, MA: 1968) argues that the literary figures who grouped themselves around Bolingbroke were opposed to the values of the new capitalism, and sought to reinstate a social and political system based on hierarchy and deference. In this context it is worth recalling the possiblity that the authorship of the "Swiftian" pamphlets originated in Bolingbroke's close circle. It seems possible that Peter was indirectly the subject of a political debate, in which what was at stake were opposed concepts of the self and of that self's relation to the social domain. In the "Swiftian" pamphlets we may glimpse an image of a world turned upside down, in which hierarchical relations are ironically inverted. However, the carnivalesque quality of such an inversion may be doubted: this inverted world reasserts the values of its traditional ordering. It is the incapacity of people to remain in their social place, and to behave as they should in that place, which is the implicit object of the satire. In Defoe we witness a process ultimately more disturbing of social norms. The self becomes an index against which humanity may be discerned, and this self in turn is found to exist in the dual and interconnected realms of the soul and of the market. Peter's isolation becomes the dark opposite and realisation of this self, delimiting its outline and exemplifying the fearful consequences of the end of its tyranny.

The economic realm is therefore not to be opposed to the domain of the soul, or that which establishes the human, but is rather the fulfilment of that domain, the place in

which the soul may appear. It is in the marketplace that the human soul constitutes itself. In *An Essay Upon the Public Credit* (1710) (London: 1797), Robert Harley compares the soul to the workings of credit in the market:

> Like the soul in the body, it actuates all substance, yet, it is itself immaterial; it gives motion, yet, itself cannot be said to exist; it creates forms, yet, has itself no form; it is neither quantity nor quality, it has no *whereness*, or *whenness*, *site* or *habit*. If I should say it is *the essential shadow of something that is not*, should I not puzzle the thing, rather than explain it, and leave you and myself more in the dark than we were before? (Harley, 1797: 8).

In this apologia for the new economic system, Harley brings to the subject of money the mystifying definitions of theology. What is most revealing here is the lack of embarrassment at the incongruity of the two subjects. The workings of the soul and the workings of money share the identity of being the productive forces which define the human.

The radical loneliness of Defoe's Crusoe is a dual loneliness, being that of the sinner before God, and also of the self within the structures of competition. The two coalesce: one is the merely worldly counterpart of the other. However, the loneliness of Peter is that of the human deprived of these constitutive forces, exiled from their humanising realms. The loneliness which Defoe's characters exhibit is primarily an economic and social loneliness, one in which all ties and bonds have been broken except those of money (that is, an artificial means of exchange) and the assumed presence of shared humanity. Peter belongs in a state in which even this shared fact of humanness cannot be said to exist: he lives on the boundary of such shared belonging, entitled on this borderline to the consideration of charity, but still alien, strange, and other. It is in the nature of his silence that this otherness was to be most clearly understood.

Part Four - Opera: The Understanding of the Feral Child's Silence

In the pamphlets, Peter's soul-less life places him not only among those who live on the surface of things - a condition exemplified by the inter-connected figures of the aristocrat and the fool - but also among those who embody the expression of an almost pre-verbal experience of interior passion - exemplified by deaf and dumb and the opera singer. I concentrate here on the relation of Peter to language, a central consideration in the Defoe pamphlet, and a primary concern for all writers on the feral child.

It is a curious feature of the pamphlets written about Peter, whose own taste for music was much remarked upon, that several of them are also concerned with the subject of the Italian opera in London, specifically with the conflict between Handel's two singers, Madam Faustina Bordoni and Madam Francesca Cuzzoni.[10] This conjunction may be no more than coincidence. However, the use of opera in these pamphlets throws into relief one more element in their representation of the feral child, that is the nature of silence.

A satirical pamphlet, *Faustina:or the Roman Songstress, A Satyr, on the Luxury and Effeminacy of the Age* (London: 1726), links the popularity of the opera to the decline of Britain. This decline manifests itself through a devaluation of language. The author deplores the current fashionable trend among the aristocracy to be illiterate:

> Our *Petits Maitres* now are so polite,
> They think 'tis barbarous to Read or Write:
> Learning with them is a most heinous Sin,
> Their only study is to Dress, to Grin,
> To Visit, to drink Tea, gallant a Fan,
> And ev'ry Foolery below a Man (1726: 5-6).

Specifically, the charge against opera is that it imports into English culture a language

unknown to English people. In this way, music is deprived of its ability to provide cheerful and rational instruction. As is apparent from a reading of the last volume of Dr. Charles Burney's *General History of Music* (London: 1789), opera was felt at the time to involve pleasure in the "'idolatry of sound'", and hence was the "'apostacy of sense'" (Burney quoting Colley Cibber, 1789, 4: 192). Burney defends Italian opera on the basis that no-one thinks it odd that we should go to a performance of music that does not involve singing at all. On the same basis, Burney asks why we are not allowed to enjoy the musical elements of operatic singing as *music* - the Italian language being the best suited for musical composition. Burney's defence draws our attention to the fact that it is precisely *because* opera involves language that its avoidance of sense provokes anxiety. For an English audience, Italian opera reduces language to the production of pleasant sounds, sounds from which meaning is absent.

Faustina connects the practice of Italian opera with the deprivation of language, its removal from the world of sense and repositioning in the silent state of nature. As has been said before, Peter's lack of language signals his animality, his difference from human society, condemning him to the condition of living outside narrative, and hence also denies him the possibility of progression:

> How, or by what Prodigy of Cruelty this Youth has been thus expos'd, in the Manner as 'tis related; by what an unheard-of Inhumanity it happens that he has never been taught to speak, or had Opportunity of conversing with human Kind, so as to learn by Imitation, for 'tis evident he can hear; This is all dark and mysterious, nor may it ever come to light; for it is more than probable, being so young, and withal so empty, as he seems to be, he may not himself remember enough of his Original, to give any Light into the Beginning of the Mystery, even tho' he should come to the Knowledge of Letters, and a Capacity of expressing himself in Words (Defoe, 1726b: 17).

Peter's eternal inscrutability will persist even if he should gain access to language, since

the mysterious part of himself is that which was formed in its absence: words have no power to call back into being the experience which has been lost in wordlessness.

Peter's state of nature, while not being exempt from political meanings, was nonetheless understood by Defoe as having a primarily metaphysical and psychological significance. The pamphlets' reflections on language manifest this same tendency. Defoe talks of investigations into Peter's silence that seek an original Adamic language:

> He is now, as I have said, in a State of Meer Nature, and that, indeed, in the literal Sense of it. Let us delineate his Condition, if we can: He seems to be the very Creature which the learned World have, for many Years past, pretended to wish for, *viz.* one that being kept entirely from human Society, so as never to have heard any one speak, must therefore either not speak at all, or, if he did form any Speech to himself, then they should know what Language Nature would first form for Mankind (Defoe, 1726b: 17).

This passage mocks a linguistic naïveté unchanged since Herodotus' anecdote. Yet Peter might embody an original, Adamic humanity. In *An Essay Upon Literature* (Defoe, London: 1726a), Defoe argues for an divine origin for written language, which comes into being at the moment that God inscribes the Ten Commandments. This interest in locating the use of language in Biblical history is also evident in his writing on Peter. He exists as a throwback to an origin, and as such he may repeat in almost experimental conditions the nature of that origin, which becomes available for learned scrutiny.

Defoe's interest in Peter's silence centres on one question in particular: how does the mind think, present ideas to itself, without the medium of words? (Defoe, 1726b: 39) How is self-consciousness possible without language? This question obviously relates to the Cartesian moment of self-definition, and a solution to its problem would draw Peter back within the domain of the human. Without its solution, Peter is once again placed outside the defining activity and nature of humanity, in this case the action of thinking, the

self-consciousness of reasoning:

> Words are to us, the Medium of Thought; we cannot conceive of Things, but by their Names, and in the very Use of their Names; we cannot conceive of God, or of the attributes of God, of Heaven, and of the Inhabitants there, but by agitating the Word GOD, and Words Infinite, Eternal, Holiness, Wisdom, Knowledge, Goodness, *&c.* as Attributes; and even the Word Attribute; we cannot conceive of Heaven, but in the very Use and Practice of the Word that signifies the Place, be it in what Language you will; we cannot muse, contrive, imagine, design, resolve, or reject; nay, we cannot love or hate, but in acting upon those Passions in the very Form of Words; nay, if we dream 'tis in Words, we speak every thing to ourselves, and we know not how to think, or act, or intend to act, but in the Form of Words; all our Passions and Affections are acted in Words, and we have no other Way for it: But what do these silent People do? 'tis evident they act their Senses and Passions upon Things, both present, and to come, and, perhaps, upon Things past also; but in what Manner, and how, that we are entirely at a Loss about; it confounds our Understanding, nor could the most refined, or refining Naturalist that I ever met with, explain it to me (Defoe, 1726b: 38-9).

Here, in considering Peter and the "deaf and dumb", Defoe comes up against the central difficulty of representing the feral child. He realizes the self's existence in, and almost complete dependence upon, the system of signs that constitute language. However, this realisation throws up the spectre of the silent, the wordless, of those who exist outside language, though re-presented to us through its medium. The passage therefore is not so much interested in the Cartesian discovery of the self in the moment of thought, but instead focuses on the problem of the existence of others, of things as they appear in the world, and of the apotheosis of otherness as represented in God. How can these things be understood or comprehended without the medium of words? And allied to this question arises the more fundamental doubt: do these things therefore have any existence outside the structures of language? Here the movement of the passage just quoted is exemplary. It commences with a rhetorical movement that draws it into a world limited by the boundaries of language (as the text itself is) and, in contemplating a world outside

language (as Peter is outside the text), it collapses into a doubt which cannot find the resolution that it seeks.

Defoe's exploration of these themes centres the relation of Peter to the condition of the deaf and dumb.[11] The presence of the deaf in Defoe's text includes the anecdotal relation of a story of a young hearing girl brought up in a family composed entirely of deaf people. The child was the last daughter of hearing parents, who had already given birth to three daughters and two sons, all of whom were "deaf and dumb". Four months after the girl's birth her mother and father died in a flood. The girl was brought up by her siblings. Her brothers and sisters spoke among themselves by the means of a system of gestures and nods. When people who could speak came to the house, the girl discerned in their voices nothing but a "confused Jargon or Medley of Sounds" (1726b: 66). These sounds appeared to the girl to be quite devoid of meaning. At the age of fourteen, it was discovered by accident that the girl had the ability to hear. Random and unco-ordinated attempts were made to teach the girl language, but all these trials failed. After three years she could speak only haltingly, and as if with a foreign accent.

In the story of the girl Defoe draws close to a modern understanding of the acquired nature of language, declaring that for this girl sign language was the natural mode of communication, while speech was to her like the noises produced by animals (Defoe, 1726b: 68-9). Here Defoe reverses the terms elsewhere employed in his text. The body's gestures become a normative and natural mode of communication for the girl: speech becomes animalistic, senseless, strange, thus taking on the characteristics of Peter's condition in the state of nature:

> Nothing could be more natural than for the Child to conclude, that this Finger Language was the true, and the only Way to understand one another, and converse together; that the other was of no Signification, but

> meer Noise, not to be imitated or understood: Nay, when she first began to learn to speak, she had no Relish of Words, no Taste; she did not soon conceive how Words could be understood, but thought the conversing by Signs, and by Motions of the Body, pointing and making Figures, and the like, infinitely more agreeable, more significant, easier to be done, more decent and handsomer to do, than to make a Gaping with her Mouth, and a Noise from it with her Tongue (Defoe, 1726b: 69-70).

This rejection of language as less desirable than the immediacy, delicacy, and grace of the body's gestural signs seems to Defoe a "fatal mistake" (Defoe, 1726b: 70). However, the force of the passage is to both demonstrate that the child follows "Native Reasoning" (Defoe, 1726b: 70), deciding from within an alternative system of signs arbitrarily set up by the family against the majority mode of speech, and also to suggest the arbitrariness of all modes of communication, through this inversion of the accepted system of speech. The girl's rejection renders language momentarily strange to us, as we glimpse it through the eyes of the other.

After three years of struggling to teach the girl, a Catholic priest took the matter in hand, and began systematic instruction in the acquisition of language, seeking to "open her Mouth, and give her the Blessings of Speech" (1726b: 70). However, the girl's distaste for language acted as a block on her ability to absorb her lessons. She could discover no music in speech, and only conceived of it as "Rudeness". She observed that:

> ... the Servants, though they made the like Noises among themselves as other People did, and, which she took to be the utmost Rudeness, yet had more Manners when they talked to their Masters and Mistresses; that then they laid it aside, and ordering themselves with Decency and Respect, received their Commands by the Fingers Ends, and made return in the same Manner; and this was all the Way of Speech that she could entertain any Notion of, or that she had any Desire to understand (1726b: 71).

Here again Defoe reverses the terms of the rest of his text. (This may be an unconscious production of the text: Defoe explicitly regards deafness and dumbness as loss). The unhierarchical rudeness of Peter's silence is here recast as courtesy, by transposing silence

in a contrary system of communication. The inversion leaves value intact: language dwindles to noise, as silent gestures are elevated into beauty. However, the concepts of meaning and beauty remain intact: they are simply repositioned in the system of values. This manifests Peter's distance from the silence of the deaf and dumb. His silence is not a simple inversion, an entrance into a contrary scheme of things: rather Peter presents the notion of the absence of value as such, an existence outside all schemes of communication, though of course possibly exisiting as a referent in such schemes. We might imagine Peter's wordlessness would be as incomprehensible to the deaf girl as it is to Defoe, though it would come closer perhaps to the ideal of communication, since his silence would not offend her by the iteration of vocal noises.

Defoe establishes that only words reveal the soul. His account of the deaf and dumb family expands this notion into an idea that only communication within a shared system of signs allows the revelation of the soul's existence. The deaf and dumb family form a microcosm of the social domain, linked to and yet cut off from the main social modes, though tied so closely to their forms as to exist as a subset only of the social realm. Peter is both outside society and outside any mode of communication. There is no means by which he can demonstrate or bring into being a human soul in himself. Without a soul he cannot speak: until he speaks he may or may not have a soul. Only speech would make his humanity certain: his silence pushes us back into uncertainty.

Why should this uncertainty in the idea of the soul be connected to the cultural phenomenon of the Italian opera? In the first part of *It Cannot Rain*, it is possible that the satire on Peter's treatment is part of a more general unease concerning the idea of spectacle and theatre as such. Both the opera and Peter are linked to the Court, and hence stand in relation to the aristocracy. The pamphlet places opera in the context of a debate

concerning its vanity and incitement to indolence:

> It is a lamentable Thing to consider how Vanity hath over spread the World of late Years, which appears more especially from the great Fancy Folks have for Stage Plays; the Iniquity of which is fully display'd in the Wise and Learned Book of the Reverend Doctor *Law*, Master of Arts, as you may read at large in the said book: but howsomever Madam *Faustina* was taken in a very miserable manner Speechless, *viz.* that is to say Hoarse, so that she could not sing; now whether this was a Judgment from Heaven to prevent the Quality and Gentry from going to the Opera, or whether it was only caused by a Natural Cold we'll leave to the Physicians and the aforesaid Reverend Divine to determine (*It Cannot Rain,* 1726b: 3).

While the passage ironcially accepts the view that the vanity of stage performances forms part of the deterioration of the aristocracy, the form of the pamphlet itself endorses "vanity": its interest lies in the peripheral, the trivial, and the unimportant - in short, in "news" and in gossip, though sometimes inveighing against these things. The form of the pamphlet itself, through its connection to the idea of news, depends upon the public exhibition of the self in anecdote and report, in a notion of public life as itself theatrical. In the other "Swiftian" part of *It Cannot Rain*, the author attacks the notion of imitation, of the "Harlequins, Scaramouches, and Masqueraders", in a way which again links the pamphlet to a dislike of theatre and opera. Peter's position as a man without a mask (the comment about his knowledge of "simples" could well be a pun relating to this point) connects him to a suspicion of the roles human beings play in society: the pamphlet's concentration on hypocrisy strengthens this point.

Again, in the "Swiftian" *It Cannot Rain* (the so-called second part), another development of Peter's connection to the practice of opera can be determined - one which turns out to have some bearing on this attack on the hypocrisy of play-acting. Peter is shown in this pamphlet not to be devoid of language, but in fact to possess another kind of language: that is, the language of animals. He talks among the animals as one among

his "Fellow-Citizens" (*It Cannot Rain*, 1726a: 7). This is to imagine Peter as existing in a state of nature which is in fact an alternative polis. Incidentally, this idea is repeated in the other "Swiftian" pamphlet, *The Most Wonderful Wonder* (1726: 7).

In *It Cannot Rain*, Peter acts as an interpreter and a mediator between the animal and human worlds: "Love he expresseth by the Cooing of a Dove, and Anger by the Croaking of a Raven; and it is not doubted but that he will serve in Time as an Interpreter between us and other Animals" (*It Cannot Rain*, 1726a: 8). His position on the borderline of both states permits his ease of movement from one world to the other. Human emotions are shown to be linked metaphorically and linguistically to the animal world, and hence to the state of nature.

In *The Most Wonderful Wonder*, Peter's function as interpreter expands to that of critic of human language. He reveals the speech of the time to be marked by an emptiness of moral values:

> I can give you no farther Account, having been so small a Time among them, and not as yet well enough acquainted with their manner of Expression; for they use many words to which they join no *Idea*. These are I fancy imaginary Deities; as Justice, Honour, Religion, Truth, Friendship, Loyalty, Piety, Charity, Mercy, Public Good, and many others which commonly fill their Discourse; but what is meant by 'em I cannot yet discover, though I have a strong Notion they have no Meaning at all; and are only employed to give a Grace to their Conversation, because they sound pleasant to the Ear, and run glibly off the Tongue (*Most Wonderful Wonder*, 1726: 10-11).

The ideal against which conduct may be morally judged is found to be empty in social discourse. Words are hollowed out into a resemblance of Peter's own condition, in which all that remains is a surface, and a surface which can only be judged in aesthetic terms. Yet here it is Peter's ability to imply the depth beneath the surface which is valued. A mere animal himself, he nonetheless pierces through the charade of social vanity by

judging things on their surface appearance and discounting the implied values which their superficiality aims to link itself to. The moral value is implied to be real: only in civilised life it has become devalued by its connection to the sham of hypocrisy. Peter's privileged position is to establish a place by which the sham is shown to be a sham. However, this position only allows the implied endorsement of those values pretended to within London social life.

In the devaluation of spoken language caused by social hypocrisy, the silence of the dumb attains to a superiority otherwise denied it. This is clearest in *Mere Nature*. The dumb possess a natural language, which reverses, or exists apart from the confusion generated in Babel's multitude of tongues:

> Nor is their Speech *by Mimickry* convey'd,
> By Sylab, Sound, and Imitation *led*:
> Their Voice *depends not* on the Organ EAR,
> 'Tis Nature's *universal Character*,
> And all *would speak alike*, tho' none *cou'd* hear:
> To them *sufficient*, and to them *confin'd*,
> Peculiar not *to Country*, but to *Kind*.
> In every Land their Language *is the same*,
> *Babel* no Difference made, no Change to *them* (Defoe, 1726b: 46-7).

The language of the dumb does not share the destabilising fact of human imitativeness. It belongs to the universally human: it does not exist in a web of resemblances, but partakes of the nature of the origin. The silence which had condemned Peter to exist outside humanity begins to take on the defining characteristics of the essentially human.

The youth's silence can be a form of innocence: it keeps him apart from a world in which Pride, Ambition, Avarice, Rancour, and Malice are known (Defoe, 1726b: 43). Like the "dumb", Peter enjoys an innocence which would be ended by passing into the realm of language:

> ... Free from the *general vices of the Times*,

They feel *our Joys*, and can't commit *our Crimes*.
O! who, that knows himself in full Extent,
Would not, *like them*, be *Dumb* and *Innocent* (Defoe, 1726b: 50).

Later in the same poem, Defoe specifically grants the "dumb", and therefore Peter too, who is shown as being analagous to the mute, a superior relation to God, one in which the connection of the self to things, and therefore of the self to God, is unmediated by words, but instead exists in a relationship which is purer, and more direct:

The Power of Thought's *within themselves* confin'd,
And forms *quite differing Figures* in the Mind;
The Soul a different *Sense of Things* affords,
And thinks without the *Agency of Words*.

In all the *distant Views* their Fancy frames,
It forms *the Images* without *the Names*:
A Flight *so high*, and so above *our Speech*,
As all the *babling World* can never reach.

If we *but* think, that Thought's *to Words* confin'd;
For Thought's but Speech *in Whisper* to the Mind;
The Strength of Nature *can no further go*, [...
...] He that *without the Help of Speech* can pray,
Must *talk to Heav*en by some superior *Way*.

O! could I thus of *Things divine* conceive
So, Images without their Crime *receive*,
So pray, *and so* my Soul *to Heaven* impart,
I'd be both *Deaf*, and *Dumb*, with all *my Heart* (Defoe, 1726b: 53).

Here, through the analogy between Peter's silence and that of the "deaf and dumb", Defoe creates a moment where the central idea of his tract - that the soul in Peter is confined through silence - might be said to deconstruct itself. There are of course substantial differences between the condition of the socialised "deaf and dumb" and the feral child. However, Defoe's awareness of these differences appears intermittent: he certainly seems to regard Peter as explicable through this analogy, and also (though this is more open to dispute) would appear to wish to explain the nature of the "deaf and dumb" through Peter.

All these things notwithstanding, this remains a significant and sudden recasting of the text from within. The body's "confining" that had been shown in Peter to restrict the self to mere nature, leaving the soul unformed and immanent, here becomes a sign of the soul's purer and more direct relation to the divine. The holiness of this relation stems from the fact that the body is locked in silence. In so far as words are a medium of exchange they also become a sign of removal from direct contact, edging the self away from the purity of things, and from the Divine, and into the corruption of distance. Defoe straightforwardly describes language as "crime". It is linked again to the condition of self-consciousness which Defoe has already connected to the Fall: "*For Thought's* but Speech *in Whisper* to the Mind". The self communes with itself, and so deprives itself of a direct relation to the thing, or to God.

In other words, the condition of the soul's non-appearance in external signs, and hence a concentration on the doubt produced at the surface, is now redefined as a transcendent and mystical communion. This attempt to describe the imagined workings of consciousness in the deaf and in the feral child creates a myth of an Adamic relation to the world. The mind thinks in images which are not reproductions of the world, but direct communication with it. The body is no longer a prison-house: it is words that are now the agency of our confinement.

Although Defoe is clear in his belief that language must have required a divine origin (1726b: 81), and the text posits itself on the basis of the social and metaphysical necessity of words, it remains drawn to the condition of silence embodied in Peter. The silent person both unsettles the idea of the soul, and yet also exists as a metaphor for the soul itself. In describing the devaluation of language in the realm of the social, the representations of Peter move towards a means of communication, and of being, free from

the instability of imitation and the immorality of the social world. This exists in the texts on Peter in three senses: in the wild boy's linguistic contact with the animals; in his silence with its connection to the world of the deaf; and, by implication, in the passionate speech of opera, in which words reach for the condition of presence signified by silence.

Both Peter's speechless cries and opera's renewal of language, through its approach to the wordless condition of music, affirm the presence of the other at the moment in which the self appears most alien, most unlike the socialised and conventional self-representation of the human being. The feral child, like the singer, is the human existing at the point of difference: one exiled from the social by his intrinsic silence, the other breaking apart the artifices of the social within the moment of passionate contact. The absence of "soul" in Peter is transformed by its overwhelming presence in opera.

The idea that the feral child is without a soul reappears in later accounts - as we shall see when we come to discuss the idea of "soul murder" in the writings on Kaspar Hauser. Similarly, the feral child's lack of language is central to all the later accounts, though it is investigated most profoundly in Itard's account of the "Wild Boy of Aveyron" (see Chapter Four, Part Four). However, it is the development of the idea of the "state of nature", both in political and psychological terms, that was most to transform the representation of the feral child, particularly when that idea merges with an evolutionary understanding of society and of the mind. These tendencies emerge in the next major case study of the feral child, in those writings that describe Memmie Le Blanc, the "Savage Girl of Champagne".

CHAPTER THREE

THE SAVAGE GIRL OF CHAMPAGNE

Part One - The Shepherd's Beast: The History of the Savage Girl

On 28th March 1765, while staying in Paris, Lord Monboddo paid the first of several visits to Mademoiselle Marie-Angélique Memmie Le Blanc.[1] He called on her at her third-floor apartment in the Rue St. Antoine, facing the old road to Temple.[2] There she related to him the confused facts of her life. She told him of her fragmentary memories of infancy; of how she had been captured by slavers: of her transportation by ship to France; of her escape with a "negro" girl and their life together in the woods; of how she was abandoned by her companion following a terrible and violent argument; and of her subsequent solitary life.

In December 1731 the savage girl appeared at Songi near the town of Chalons in Champagne:

> One evening in the month of September 1731, a girl nine or ten years old, pressed, as it would seem, by thirst, entered about the twilight into Songi, a village situated four or five leagues south of Chalons in Champagne. She had nothing on her feet: her body was covered with rags and skins: her hair with a gourd leaf: and her face and hands were black as a

> Negroe's. She was armed with a short baton, thicker at one end than the other, like a club. Those who first observed her, took to their heels, crying out, "There is the devil." And indeed her dress and colour might very well suggest this idea to the country people. Happiest were they who could soonest secure their doors and windows; but one of them, thinking, perhaps, that the devil was afraid of dogs, set loose upon her a bull dog with an iron collar. The little savage seeing him advancing in a fury, kept her ground without flinching, grasping her little club with both hands, and stretching herself to one side, in order to give greater scope to her blow. Perceiving the dog within her reach, she discharged such a terrible blow on his head as laid him dead at her feet. Elated with her victory, she jumped several times over the dead carcase of the dog. Then she tried to open a door, which not being able to effect, she ran back to the country towards the river, and mounting a tree, fell quietly asleep (*Savage Girl*, 1768: 1-2).[3]

The Viscount D'Epinoy ordered the girl to be captured. A local peasant guessed that she would be thirsty, "which was attributed to his great knowledge of the manners and customs of savages" (*Savage Girl*, 1768: 2-3) ("mais dont on fit honneur à sa grande connoissance des moeurs & coutumes des Sauvages" (*Savage Girl*, 1755: 5)). A trap was laid for the girl by placing a pitcher of water at the foot of the tree in which she had gone to sleep. When she came down to drink an attempt was made to grab her, but she was startled by something, and fled back up to her hiding place before she could be caught. The same peasant suggested that women and children should approach the girl, these being less frightening to the "savage" mind (*Savage Girl*, 1755: 5-6; 1768: 3). The women went up to the girl, smiling and invitingly holding out dishes of vegetable roots. The little "savage" advanced in order to get hold of this enticing prize, but the women backed away, so drawing the girl into a trap, allowing the local men to seize her: "She never told me anything of the grief she felt on being taken, nor of the efforts she made to escape; but we may easily imagine both" (1768: 4).[4]

The girl was reckoned to be about nine years old. Her apparent blackness turned out to be the result of dirt: on being washed she was revealed as being "white" (1755: 7;

1768: 5). Her hands were discovered to have grown unusually large, perhaps as a result of her moving around by swinging from the branches of trees. She lodged for a while with a local shepherd, and as a result was called "*The Shepherd's beast*" by the local villagers ("*La bête du Berger*") (1755: 9; 1768: 6). The girl lived in this way for several years, making several attempts to escape, but always being brought back to her life with the shepherd and his family.

Memmie moved to a convent, where, in 1737, she was visited by Marie Leszcsinska, the Queen of Poland, and the mother of the Queen of France. The Queen was much impressed by the "savage girl", and, hearing of her ability to run like the wind, took her out hunting. The young girl "giving full scope to her natural inclination" ("se livrant à son naturel") (1755:11; 1768: 9), ran on ahead, catching the hares and rabbits, and bringing them back to the Queen.

Slowly, the girl was civilised, and received into the Catholic Church. When Monboddo met her she was ill and infirm from the gastric illnesses brought on by being forced to eat cooked foods in the period of her reclamation. Memmie Le Blanc told Monboddo face to face of how she now lived by selling copies of her story to curious visitors. She lived in convents and other religious houses for a number of years, being noted for her piety. The date of her death, like so much else in her life, is uncertain.

It is not difficult to guess Lord Monboddo's interest in meeting what appeared to him an authentic impersonation of the origins of human nature. Monboddo's involvement

with her case and his philosophical speculations on the questions arising from Memmie Le Blanc's very existence testify to his continuing fascination with the nature of the human species and of how its history might be comprehended.

James Burnet, Lord Monboddo, was born at Monboddo in Scotland on 14th October 1714, where he died nearly eighty five years later on 26th May 1799. He was educated at home by Dr. Francis Skeene, and then at Marischal College, Aberdeen. He went to Edinburgh University, and then studied at Groningen for three years, passing his final exams on 12 February 1737. Five days later he was admitted to the Faculty of Advocates in Edinburgh. A brilliant career as a lawyer followed. In 1764, he was appointed Sheriff of Kincardineshire, and on 12 February 1767 was made a lord of session. However, he refused a seat in the court of justiciary as he feared that it would interfere with his philosophical work. In the end, Monboddo became a judge at the Scottish bar, being noted for his eccentricity in not sitting at the bench with his fellow judges, but instead taking his seat with the clerks (*Burnett, James*, 1886, 7: 412-414). He continued to indulge an appetite for philosophical inquiry as a member of Edinburgh's "Select Society", where he was noted for being a keen debater and an author of two ambitious and individual investigations. These are *Of The Origin And Progress of Language* published in six volumes between 1773 and 1792, and *Antient Metaphysics*, published in six volumes between 1779 and 1799. Both works were published in Edinburgh.

The usual descriptions of Monboddo as "Rousseauist" fall short of the mark. Monboddo's primitivism owes as much to Greek philosophy, particularly Aristotle and Plato, as it does to Rousseau. Although his conclusions lead him to a position sometimes accounted Darwinian, his methods show the vestiges of Scholasticism, resting as they do

upon the twin authorities of "the Classics" and of The Bible.[5]

The textual history of accounts of Memmie Le Blanc is very confused. The first published mention of the "savage girl" is in the December 1731 edition of the *Mercure de France*.[6] The piece consists of two letters. The first is: *Lettre écrite de Châlons, en Champagne, le 9 Decembre 1731. par M. A M. N.... du sujet de la Fille sauvage, trouvée aux environs de cette Ville*. The second is simply entitled: *Extrait d'une autre Lettre sur le même sujet*. These were printed three months after Memmie's first appearance at Songi. These two letters form the second and third appendices of the book length account of Memmie.

Louis Racine writes of the "savage girl" in lines 21-37 of his *Epître II sur l'homme* (1747). Memmie is part of a discussion of humanity in its "savage" origins:

> Autrefois dispersés, féroces et muets,
> Les hommes, nous dit-on, errans dans les forêts,
> Quoiqu'ils n'eussent encor que leurs ongles pour armes,
> Les remplisssoient [*sic*] de cris, de meurtres et d'alarmes;
> Et ce qu'étoient alors nos sauvages aïeux,
> Une fille en nos jours la fait voir à nos yeux.
> Ce n'étoient point des mots qu'articuloit sa bouche:
> Il n'en sortoit qu'un son, cri perçant et farouche.
> Des vivans animaux que déchiroit sa main,
> Les morceaux palpitans assouvissoient sa faim.
> Dès l'enfance elle erra de montagne en montagne,
> Et souilla ses déserts du sang de sa compagne.
> Pourquoi l'immola-t-elle à ses propres fureurs?
> Quel intérêt si grand vint séparer deux coeurs
> Qu'unissoient leurs forêts, leur âge et leurs misères?
> Reconnoissons les mœurs de nos antiques pères (Racine, 1808, 2: 123-124).

Here Memmie becomes what she was to be for Monboddo, that is a living embodiment of the primal nature of humanity, present before our very eyes. Memmie exists as a piece of an unhistorical past thrust by accident into an historical present. The past that Memmie embodies is one that is distinctly not that of a lost golden age. Racine founds humanity

in an image of original sin: a footnote to his text which argues that the idea of a Golden Age is a fable which does not correspond to the silent, solitary, and brutish reality of the pre-historical past. This desire to replace a fabled origin of innocence and order with one of a pre-political animality is endemic in the period, and certainly links Racine's text directly with Monboddo's writings.

In a further footnote, Racine gives what further information he can regarding Memmie's history:

> Cette étonnante fille, triste exemple de ce que nous serions sans l'éducation et la société, fut trouvée par hasard, il y a environ quinze ans, près de Châlons en Champagne, et est maintenant dans un couvent de cette province. Après toutes les peines que l'on a prises pour adoucir sa férocité, elle en conserve quelques restes dans les regards et les manières: elle n'aime ni notre nourriture, ni la société, où elle ne reste que par obéissance à Dieu. La religion dont elle est instruite, l'empêche, dit-elle, de retourner dans les bois. Comme elle y avoit été abandonnée dès la plus tendre enfance, elle ignore où elle est née, et se souvient seulement d'avoir tué une compagne de sa solitude. C'est tout ce qu'elle a pu raconter de son histoire (Racine, 1808, 1: 124).

Some time later, Racine expanded on this information in a prose piece entitled *Eclaircissement sur la fille sauvage dont il parlé dans l'Epitre II sur l'homme* (Racine, 1808, 5: 573-582). This appeared after the publication of the anonymous history of the "savage girl". Racine stresses the operation of divine grace in Memmie's story, by which her life was preserved. He also speculates on "the state of nature" using Memmie's past history as a focus for his ideas. The text is clearly imbued with ideas drawn from Rousseau and Condillac, though these are tempered by a Pascalian Catholicism. Primarily, Racine is eager to demonstrate, through the history of Memmie's religious beliefs, and her life attached to the church, that the human being is born with an innate predisposition to religious ideas, feelings, and teachings.

However, the primary documentary source of Memmie Le Blanc's history is a

French text entitled *Histoire D'une Jeune Fille Sauvage, Trouvée dans les Bois a l'age de dix ans*, published by Madame Hecquet (Paris, 1755). After the main body of the text, the author presents a series of six appendices relating to aspects of Memmie's story. These are: an extract from the Register of Baptisms, giving details of Memmie's baptism; the two letters published in the *Mercure de France*, December 1731; a list of reasons why Memmie is probably one of the Esquimaux; an extract of a letter from Madame Duplessis, a nun and an old friend of the writer's, to Madame H___t, in which mention is made of the Esquimaux nation; and an extract from an account by Baron La Hontan of the Esquimaux.

The authorship of the *Histoire D'une Jeune Fille Sauvage* is unknown. The two contenders are Madam Hecquet herself, and the French scientist and explorer, Charles Marie de la Condamine.[7] To my knowledge, Madam Hecquet wrote no other works. However, La Condamine was a prolific author of the French scientific Enlightenment. He wrote several works advocating inoculation, a letter on education, an account of the measurement of the earth, a history of the pyramids, a travel book on Italy, and a highly popular account of a journey into the interior of South America, among other works. La Condamine's credentials are apparently more impressive than those of Madam Hecquet. They rest primarily on an attribution by Abeille mentioned in A. Barbier, *Dictionnaire des ouvrages anonymes* (Paris: 1806-8). Yet there are some indications that the text is written by a woman. La Condamine is mentioned in the third person (1755: 26-27; 1768: 21-22) and distinguished from the narrator. Moreover, the narrator is expressly said to have first met Memmie in 1752, some five years after La Condamine first met her in 1747 (1755: 28; 1768: 24). Madam Hecquet is not written of in the third person in the text itself, but two of the letters in the appendices are addressed directly to her. Moreover,

both of the English translations credit "Madam H__t" as the original author of the text. All these circumstances strongly suggest that Madam Hecquet is the original author of the work as we now have it, though it is *possible* that La Condamine was partly responsible.

The *Histoire D'une Jeune Fille Sauvage* was first translated into English as *The History of a Savage Girl, Caught WILD in the woods of Champagne* (London: 1760). The translator of this text was anonymous. Another version of the French original appeared in 1768, with a preface by Monboddo. The Monboddo text appeared as *An Account of a Savage Girl Caught WILD in the Woods of Champagne* (Edinburgh: 1768).[8]

Monboddo did not himself translate the 1768 text, merely providing a preface that details the history of the savage girl and his own conjectures concerning her origin. Handwritten on a blank page at the beginning of the British Library copy, there appear the following paragraphs concerning the work's authorship:

> This translation was done by a clerk of L. Monboddo's (under his direction) when he went to Paris on the Douglas Cause.
> Lord M. says, "he often [*indecipherable*] & convers'd with Mademoiselle Le Blanc, & vouches for the truth of the particulars contained in the preface" - which is chiefly written by himself.[9]

Lord Monboddo's clerk was William Robertson. The story of Memmie Le Blanc also appears in Lord Monboddo's *Antient Metaphysics: or, the Science of Universals* published at Edinburgh in six volumes between 1779 and 1799. Monboddo draws upon his earlier speculations concerning the savage girl in Volume IV of this monumental work (1795). In 1796, due to interest revived in the savage girl by the publication of *Antient Metaphysics*, the 1768 text was reprinted on the instructions of Lord Monboddo (Cloyd, 1972: 159).

Interest in the "savage girl" again revived in the period 1820-4. Two accounts of

Memmie appeared in England in 1820. One was a long pamphlet entitled *Savage Girl* (London, J. Bailey: 1820). The title-page of this work reads: *La Belle Sauvage. The True and Surprising History of a Savage Girl, found Wild in the Woods of Champagne, by Mons. D'Epinoy, and Presented to the Queen of Poland. Containing an Account of the manner of her first being discovered - Her Battle with her Companion, in which she was victorious - Her passage to England in a Danish ship, to the Captain of which she gave an Account of her former situation in Life, and her Conversion to Christianity. To which is added, Authentic Anecdotes of the Wild Man of the Woods, Found by King George the Second on a Hunting Party in Germany, and many years known here by the name of Peter the Wild Boy.* The pamphlet cost sixpence, and was prefaced with a colour illustration, depicting Memmie being enticed from her tree by a young woman holding a baby in one hand, and root vegetables and fish in the other. Memmie is depicted as a young white girl, dressed in skins, in pointed contrast to the delicately rosy-cheeked and bonnetted young French woman. The pamphlet begins as an abridged account drawn from the original English translations. Some details differ from the versions of 1760 and 1768. Firstly, the title-page promises that Memmie will be brought to England, an event which never takes place within the narrative itself. Secondly, it hints that the narrator of the tale should be identified with the Captain of the ship which brought her to England, thereby clearing up a mystery never explained in the original text. The addition of material concerning Peter the Wild Boy is intriguing. It indicates that even in the popular imagination these disparate stories of abandoned children were being linked together due to an understanding of their common features. The account of Peter is drawn from Monboddo's *Antient Metaphysics.*

The other account of Memmie published in 1820 is found in a single broadsheet,

printed in Newcastle by J. Marshall. The story of the "Savage Girl" occupies the entire reverse side of a broadsheet that also presents "A True and Particular Account of the Trial and Execution of James O'Neil, Who was Hanged on Newcastle Town Moor, on Saturday the 7th of September, 1816, for Highway Robbery and an Attempt to Murder." There seems to be little connection between the two stories, but this was a customary practice for printers and sellers at the time. What unites these two stories is simply their ability to stimulate curiosity. The British Library Catalogue correctly gives the date of publication as 1820. However, both stories narrate events set in 1816, Memmie Le Blanc's story being updated to the recent past in order to make it more newsworthy. The account of Memmie ends with a sworn affadavit to the story's truth by a Dr. Saisprieur, "Curate of St. Suiplice". This is a garbled version of Dansais, "Prieur, Curé de St. Sulpice", who, in an appendix to the original version of the story, presents Memmie's baptismal record. Despite the text's rather doubtful claims to authenticity, the actual account of Memmie is interesting in so far as it both preserves in abbreviated form the main facts of the girl's discovery, and especially in emphasising those aspects of the story that are most akin to the mythic image of the wild. The story appears to derive from the reworking of the translation found in the previous pamphlet. What the existence of both publications would imply is firstly, interest in this kind of story, and secondly, a willingness to rewrite such stories in order to fit them better for the literary marketplace.

In 1821, two pamphlets concerning Memmie were published in Scotland. It is possible that Monboddo's Scottish origins are in some way connected to the publication of this pair of pamphlets. One is entitled, *The Surprising Savage Girl, Who was Caught Wild in the Woods of* Champagne, *a Province in France. Containing a True and Faithful Narrative of many Curious and Interesting Particulars, respecting this Wonderful*

Creature (Falkirk, T. Johnston: 1821). The other repeats this title, except it replaces "Creature" with "Phenomenon" (Glasgow, Robert Hutchison, 1821). Both the Falkirk and Glasgow texts have crude illustrations depicting the savage girl. The Falkirk text shows what looks like a young and swarthy child, clad only in a rough loin cloth. The Glasgow text presents a more stylish version of Memmie, smiling, and dressed in a country gown. The Falkirk text ends with the appendix by Dansais, here called "D. Sais". The Glasgow text goes on to give a "Whimsical Anecdote" concerning the imitative faculty of monkeys - which is highly suggestive in view of some elements in Monboddo's text, as I will go on to argue in this chapter. The Falkirk text was reprinted in 1824, with "Phenomenon" replacing "Creature" in the title. This would suggest that the Falkirk text was published first, pirated by the Glasgow publisher, and then that the Falkirk publisher, impressed by the word "Phenomenon" incorporated it into his reprint in 1824.

I have been unable to discover any previous critical works on the "savage girl" texts. Historical and cultural information can be found in Zingg (*op. cit.*), Candland (*op. cit.*), and in the preface to a modern French edition of the 1755 text, edited by Franck Tinland, and published in Paris in 1970.

Part Two - No Better Authority Than Signs

In his Preface to *An Account of a Savage Girl,* Monboddo indicates some of the reasons for his own curiosity concerning Memmie Le Blanc's case. He declares of the philosophical reader that:

> He will observe with amazement the progression of our species from an animal to wild, to men such as we. He will see evidently, by this example, that though man is by his natural bent and inclination disposed to society, like many other animals, yet he is not by natural *necessity* social, nor obliged to live upon a joint stock, like ants or bees; but is enabled, by his natural powers, to provide for his own subsistence, as much as any other animal, and more than most, as his means of subsistence are more various. In tracing back the long line of man's progression, he will discover another state of our nature even beyond that in which this girl was, however near it may seem to the original, I mean the state before language was invented, that is, the communication of general ideas, by the articulation of the voice, when men were literally, as the poet describes them, *mutum et turpe pecus*: For it is impossible to suppose, that language, the most wonderful art among men, should have been born with us, and practised by us from mere instinct, unless we could at the same time suppose, that other arts came into the world with us in the same manner; nor can we believe that it was sooner invented than other arts much less difficult, and more obvious.
>
> In this manner, the philosopher will discover a state of nature, very different from what is commonly known by that name: And from this point of view, he will see, - That these superior faculties of mind, which distinguish our nature from that of any other animal on this earth, are not *congenial* with it, as to the exercise of energy, but *adventitious* and *acquired*, being only at first *latent powers* in our nature, which have been evolved and brought into exertion by degrees, in the course of our progression above mentioned, from one state to another - That the *rational* man has grown out of the mere *animal*, and that *reason* and *animal sensation*, however distinct we may imagine them, run into one another by such insensible degrees, that it is as difficult, or perhaps more difficult, to draw the line betwixt these two, than betwixt the *animal* and the *vegetable* (Monboddo, 1768: xvi-xviii).

From this it is clear that Monboddo's primary concern is that the reader should trace through the story of Memmie Le Blanc the insensible and minute succession of changes

that delineate the progress of humanity from animal to civilisation. The feral child here acts as evidence for a "state of nature", but also subverts certain idealised images of that state. His secondary concern is to show through an account of this history that language is the creation of a shared artifice, of a world established by human ingenuity and fabrication. Most especially, he begins to set out the idea that humanity is an essence, a nature, that exists prior to, and apart from, language. The savage girl becomes in Monboddo's conjectures about her, just as in the text of her story, a symbol of human origins, of that point in history at which the animal species "homo sapiens" becomes the civilised and individualised human being. Yet, Monboddo also wishes to assert that though humanity emerges from a transformative process, it remains even in its origin identifiably "human".

Though Monboddo is firm on Memmie's human status, others were not as clear about their kinship with the "savage girl". From the very first, the savage girl's nature was felt as something on the borderline of the human. The opening quote has shown that those who first saw her, "took to their heels, crying out, 'There is the devil' " (*Savage Girl*, 1768: 1). To more "enlightened" observers the young girl suggested not the old superstitions of witches and demons, but rather contemporary notions of "the state of nature". (It is coincidental, but significant, that the year in which the French original of Memmie's story appeared also saw the publication of Rousseau's *Discours sur l'origine de l'inégalité*). An appendix to *An Account of a Savage Girl* presents a letter from Madame Duplessis to "Madame H.....t" (Hecquet), describing the manners of the Esquimaux as evidence for the belief outlined in the main text that Memmie Le Blanc originally formed a member of that "savage" tribe. Madame Duplessis envisages the Esquimaux as "the most savage of savages", being barely human at all but rather existing

on the shadowy borderline between mankind and "the beasts" (1755: 64-65; 1768:57-58).[10]

More fancifully, metaphors in the text at times ascribe a genuinely animal nature to the young "savage girl". The villagers who find her name her "*the shepherd's beast*" (1755: 9; 1768: 6), and the narrator describes her as a "squirrel". The narrator then points out that this image was used by Memmie herself:

> The similitude of the squirrel is entirely her own: and indeed the flying squirrels which she may have seen in her youth, might have suggested to her this method of transporting herself; a circumstance that gives additional weight to the conjectures which we shall afterwards offer with respect to her native country (*Savage Girl*, 1768: 5-6).[11]

Interestingly, this ascription of the metaphor to Memmie acts as a guarantee of her origin. The image arises unconsciously from the half-repressed memories of her youth. Most curious of all is the infrequency with which Memmie is described as what she was, a bewildered and solitary ten year old girl. When Memmie's childishness is mentioned it is in order to treat it as strange or disconcerting. It is pointed out that Memmie's nature is somehow "retarded" and that while a young teenager she continues to exhibit the behaviour of a very young child:

> Though she had been then several years tamed, yet her disposition, her behaviour, even her voice and speech, were, as she affirms herself, but like those of a child four or five years old. The sound of her voice, though weak, was sharp, shrill, and piercing; and her words were short and confused, like those of a child, at a loss for terms to express it's [*sic*] meaning (*Savage Girl*, 1768: 8).[12]

In each of these analogies for the young girl's nature - those of the savage, the animal, and the infant - we find that the tendency of the writers is to place Memmie at a human origin, and so on the boundaries of civilisation.

As will happen again with Kaspar Hauser, Memmie's position at this origin

becomes mixed up with a desire to see her as holy, an embodiment of natural piety. We have already seen how central this idea is to Racine's writings on the "savage girl". Memmie's aversion to being touched is easily transformed into a pious rejection of the sins of the flesh.

Further to this attempt to understand the young girl by analogy with an origin, we find that the desire to place her by the discovery of her racial origin pervades the main narrative itself and Monboddo's preface.[13] The girl's country of origin remains a mystery, since she herself is unable to remember either who she is or where she comes from. That this attempt to find an originating place for Memmie holds racial undertones is apparent from the several references that stress the fact of her whiteness. Memmie's very surname "Le Blanc" is of course a joke about this whiteness. Memmie can be washed "white", and her supposed blackness is an accidental property. The "whiteness" that is integrally her's exists in the text as a reminder of her strangeness, a strangeness that resides in her combination of domesticity and "savagery". This primarily stems from the incongruity of the fact that Memmie is a "savage" located in the home territory of France:

> Independent of the natural aversion discovered by Madamoiselle Le Blanc at the fire, of her propensity to plunge into the water in the coldest weather, of her taste for raw fish, which was her favourite food, and of the other observations already set down, which do not permit us to doubt of her being a native of some northern region, bordering on the Frozen Ocean: Her white colour, just like our own, is conclusive on this point, leaving not the smallest uncertainty: For it is an undoubted fact, that all the natives of the inland countries of Africa, and of the other warm and temperate climates of America, are either black, olive, or copper-coloured. If therefore the only remaining question were, How two young savages, of some northern country, could have come into France? - It might be solved in many different ways, all equally probable [...] The Negroes of Africa, when carried to the West Indies, a climate much of the same temperature with their own, accomodate themselves to it without any difficulty, and thrive extremely well; but all attempts to naturalize the savages of the northern regions to that country have proved unsuccessful (*Savage Girl*, 1768: 36-7).[14]

This passage plays upon the idea of Memmie's similitude to the white European - her skin is like "our" own - while reinforcing her disturbing difference: as shown in the raw fish she devours, the freezing water she happily dives into. The influence of Montesquieu acts in such a way as to reinforce the idea of human difference (climate distinguishes us from each other in inescapable ways) while referring us back to the basic paradox: a "savage" may be found here in the woods of France.

We can witness in Memmie's tale the process by which the methods of "romance" narrative became the main structural device and thematic organisation of "the child of nature" story. In the course of her biography we find that the investigation into the origin of humanity as such becomes confused with the desire to form a plot in which the individual's origin is lost and then found again. Implicit in Monboddo's preface is the idea that we as philosophical readers may enquire into our human beginnings through the case history of the feral child. In this view, the human being appears as only a special kind of animal, and that area in which its animal uniqueness occurs can be traced and encoded scientifically. However, in the preface and the main text there forms almost irresistibly a contrary set of assumptions and interests, which involves us with Memmie as a person possessing a history that exists and yet is lost to her and to others. This unique personal history (limited by racial origin) lies firstly in her body, that which announces her as a member of the human species but also remains inalienably her own. Her body is the visible manifestation of an ethnic group, but also of a particular individual. This self may also be substantiated by signs, the typical embodiments of the romance plot.

Both the writer of the main text and Monboddo allude to the possibility that their work might have the marks of romance. Monboddo declares that the case history will have much the same interest to certain readers as *Robinson Crusoe*, though he

characterises this way of reading as for the "vulgar" as opposed to "the philosophical reader":

> The vulgar will be entertained with this relation much in the same manner as they are with the history of Robinson Crusoe; but to the philosopher it will appear matter of curious speculation; and he will draw from it consequences not so obvious to the generality of readers (Monboddo, 1768: xvi).

This carries a resistance to the "romantic", replacing it with an appropriate seriousness which recasts the fantastic elements of the story as weighty speculation, and perhaps betraying an anxiety about the meanings and enjoyments of such a tale. The narrator of the main text points out that though she would rather not stray into the territory of "romance", where facts are lacking imaginative conjectures must step in:

> Though here it is by no means our province or intention to compose a romance, or to devise imaginary adventures, yet where certainty is wanting, we must look for probability. Of all the different suppositions I have formed for connecting the various circumstances of this history, what follows is the simplest and the most probable (*Savage Girl*, 1768: 37).[15]

This disavowal occurs just at the point where the writer begins to explore the question of Memmie's own origin.

Further, the quest for Memmie's place of origin becomes one conducted through the questioning of the documents, of the text as such. In this process the instability of Memmie's text, which has already become apparent in what has so far been written here concerning Memmie's nature, complicates the search for a stable and designated identity. It proves difficult to establish an authorial origin for statements concerning the savage girl, due firstly to the problems of ascertaining whether the work's first author is La Condamine or Madame Hecquet, or a collaboration between the two of them. In considering the work as an English text, further, there are considerations as to how much of the original French was translated by Monboddo, who is described as the "director" of

his servant's labour. Moreover the text's relation to Monboddo's Preface, the chief source of its fame in England, is problematic, especially as the instability of identity arising from these questions of attribution extend into the discourse of the main text and also form a theme of Monboddo's Preface. It is likely that Monboddo was responding to a feature of the main text's discourse in forming the presentation of his own Preface, which becomes in this way a subtle commentary or even piece of literary criticism on the subject of the authenticity of identity. The work is altogether a joint enterprise, a text without one author, or even one translator, a story made up from the records of conversations, discussions and research. It is quite properly named *an* account. These problems of attribution reflect its narrative procedures.

In the accounts of Memmie Le Blanc, the theme of origins acts as the authenticating method within which identity establishes itself. This point of absolute truth from which the identity of the self begins and enters the relative world of discourses appears as a necessary fiction both for the "individual", but also for the work of art. What is unusual about Monboddo's Preface, as with the main story itself, is that this "origin" becomes increasingly untenable even apart from its doubtful status as fiction.

Moreover, it is vital to bear in mind that in an ambiguous way, Memmie's story is her own. Contained within the troubled and troubling representations of the self's own fictional status, there exists in Monboddo's accounts of Memmie and in her story itself the idea that the self is capable of authorising its own history.

We have seen this already at those moments where Memmie is ascribed as the originator of the metaphors that describe her as like a squirrel, and in her affirmation of her own childishness. Moreover although Memmie did not (we suppose) write or dictate her own story, she acted as her biography's bookseller. Although this raises questions

concerning the commodification of the self and its history, it also allows Memmie a right to her own narrative, this being a right that includes the possibility of deriving financial profit from that story. The fact that Memmie sold her biography face to face adds complexity to this, as it becomes apparent that visitors and sightseers were not just buying a book from Memmie Le Blanc but were buying into her presence, witnessing in the flesh for themselves the person whose existence as an objective fact could act as a guarantee of that book's truthfulness. The ambivalent contrast between the self as "soul" and the self as commodity, that we have already witnessed in the accounts of Peter, is reworked here. The commodity that is sold is precisely that of the self's presence, the fact of being in the company of a person with just such a history.

Therefore, Memmie's ambiguity, her falling between a position as an acting, speaking person, and being merely a curious exemplar of the animal species "homo sapiens", works on all levels in Monboddo's Preface. Memmie possesses a voice and a given place in the exchange of dialogue. She can be seen to talk, to listen, and even to refute and to argue back, split between a narrating self and an incommensurable self that is narrated. In this way she may be seen to transcend the mere animal fact of her body, and hence her place at the lowest level of existence, and assume her place in the artifice of the human world. Yet this place itself depends upon her commodification of herself as "the savage girl", a person whose identity is found simply in the body, and who exists on the shifting borderlines between humanity and animality.

This contradictory dichotomy within the representation of "the child of nature" works most clearly in accounts of dialogues between Memmie Le Blanc and Monboddo or some anonymous other. The savage girl's story is one constructed through the means of dialogue. Memmie provides the basis for the account of her own life, while another

constructs that account as written discourse. There are indications here of a Rousseauist split between language as the spoken word and language as writing. Memmie's account is confused but remains authentic, an absolute point around which suppositions and guesses as to her nature must be seen to cohere. The written account in which this intermittently "present" speaking voice assumes authority is in itself palpably self-conflicting - as can be seen most clearly in the respective identities of Memmie Le Blanc and her biographer or interlocutor. Memmie's name, like her identity, is certainly fabricated and given to her. Yet her place in the text enables us to imagine her as a person possessing a biographical life in time. On the other hand, her interrogater and collator of information remains shadowy, unnamed, and undistinguishable.

I shall look at one scene from the main text in order to elucidate these narrative complexities in more detail. In the fourth appendix to the work, the anonymous narrator of the work decides to institute a psychological experiment in order to discover Memmie's place of origin. She resolves "to try the force of nature in her"/ "je voulus sonder la nature en elle" (1755: 60; 1768: 53), and sends for a collection of wooden figures or "savage puppets"/ "poupées sauvages" (1755: 60; 1768: 53) made by the native tribes of Canada. Here the word "sonder" immediately brings in the notion of dropping down into a depth, of that which is obscured from sight but nonetheless exists as a space to be measured. Though the Esquimaux dolls are by far the least adorned of all the collection, the narrator observes that it is these which immediately engage Memmie's attention. From outward signs, the narrator imagines that Memmie has seen these figures before, though she is unable to remember exactly where: "Perceiving her so attentive to these two figures, I ask'd her smiling, in order to make her speak, whether she discovered there any of her relations; I cannot tell, answered she, but I think I have seen them somewhere.

How! said I, men and women of that shape? Pretty much so, answered she; ..." (1768: 54).[16]

However, as the conversation continues, Memmie grows troubled. It appears to her that there is something wrong with the figures. The narrator dismisses these objections as "the remembrance of something she had seen in her younger days, and of which she had a confused idea. And, indeed, she immediately added herself, these ideas are so remote, that they are little to be depended on" (1768: 55).[17]

In this scene the narrative reliance upon Memmie as the unconscious authenticator of her own identity reaches one point of climax. At first reading, it can appear that the interviewer and writer is blinded by a kind of prejudice that makes him or her disregard objections to his or her favoured belief as to Memmie's origins. Memmie's remembrance becomes unreliable, and doubts that might arise from her troubled apprehension of the Esquimaux figures are given a place, but only in order to be classed as peripheral. In this way it seems as if Memmie herself is a cipher and a centre for a series of cultural images and prejudices.

This reading is of course accurate and forceful. However, these very prejudices are the means by which Memmie's selfhood is accredited as a point of absolute, "natural" truth. The narrator decides to try the force of nature upon her: that is, she creates a scenario in which Memmie's childhood identity will manifest itself in an unconscious act of primal remembrance. It is as if beneath her conscious memory there remain the vestiges of a deeper self that can be triggered by the manoeuvres of the writer. The force of nature that resides in "the child of nature" becomes the point of authenticity, by springing from a self deeper than the conscious self of dialogue, though it is in dialogue that this self is revealed. It is noteworthy that the girl's natural self manifests itself in a physical action,

the taking up of the Esquimaux dolls, and not in her later more ambivalent discussion concerning them:

> It was not what she said upon this occasion that confirmed me in my opinion; but that instinct, or natural unaffected sentiment which attached her to these two figures alone, and rendered her indifferent to all the rest, as if nature had made her sensible that she was not so much concerned in the others as in these (*Savage Girl*, 1768: 55).[18]

The word "nature" here is being used to reveal the cultural preoccupations that manifest in "the child of nature". Memmie acts from a feeling, a being, that is deeper than that of the civilised self. It is because she is "sensible" ("fait sentir") that her actions display an inner, indisputable truth. Beneath rationality and language ("paroles") there exists an authentic self.

The narrator persists in thinking Memmie one of the Esquimaux, who were supposed not to wear gloves, despite her raising of objections to such a designation: "Such, at least, was my reasoning on the distinction she made between them, and her saying so naturally, '*We had nothing on our hands*;' which the truth alone, tho' without her knowledge, made her utter" (*Savage Girl*, 1768: 55).[19] Here we see that even Memmie's speaking voice is not treated as truly her own, but rather as an unknowing vocalisation of a natural truth which she embodies. It is clear that to the writer of the text Memmie's selfhood is at times non-existent. She is then "the savage girl", and her identity is the fabrication of the writer and the cultural discourse surrounding the representation of the "savage". Her speaking presence felt by the reader is immaterial to the writer's own conscious concerns.

This concern with a truth that might authenticate experience creates a search for a series of authenticating signs, although this search proves baffling and illusory. The need to look for hard facts that will establish the truthfulness of Memmie's story derives in part

from the nature of the story itself, which is likely to arouse a reader's incredulity. Yet the quest for evidence conducted within the text does nothing to dispel disbelief, but rather writes it into the nature of the work itself.

Both *Monboddo* and the story's anonymous writer deem it necessary that Memmie's story should be proved by the summoning up of external, objective realities. However, hard facts prove as elusive as individual identities in this text. To take one example, an anecdote in Monboddo's Preface describes a journey made by the Lord and his clerk to Songi in search of the club which the savage girl had been holding on her first discovery some thirty-four years previously. Curiously, this part of the Preface is supposedly written, not by Lord Monboddo himself, but the clerk (William Robertson) who undertook the translation under Monboddo's "direction". The clerk informs the reader that the bludgeon used by the girl in her wild state was then in "the possession of the Viscount d'Epinoy, the proprietor of Songi" (Monboddo, 1768: v). Monboddo had been told that strange characters were inscribed upon the club, and hoped that by a closer scrutiny of these mysterious signs light might be cast upon Memmie Le Blanc's history. However, on arriving at Songi Lord Monboddo and his faithful clerk discovered that the Viscount had left the area only half-an-hour previously, and no-one could be found who knew the whereabouts of the bludgeon.

The anecdote of Monboddo's search for the club suggests other meanings in considering this text. The savage girl's possession of a club, while undoubtedly of practical benefit in living in the wild, calls to mind certain mythic embodiments of "the wild" as such. The club was a traditional weapon of the European "wild man", and as such suggests at least a tacit identification of Memmie Le Blanc with pre-existing notions of the "savage".[20] Memmie's origin remains mysterious, yet this very mystery indicates

the readiness with which her story might be overlaid with myth, and with the desires and anxieties concerning the relation of the "civilised" to the "savage" that the myth expresses and contains.

This is a text in which the sign lacks authority, in which the external marks of personality and objective existence prove untenable and unstable. The text suggests a mask that is really present in the act of dialogue, and moreover imaginable in the textual manifestation of that dialogue. Memmie is there, her address in Paris is given by Monboddo, and the curious first readers of this work might well have taken advantage of the information and visited Mademoiselle Le Blanc, and bought her story from her in person.

However, at every turn this conjured sense of presence vanishes. Memmie's actuality is mediated through myth, pre-supposition and prejudice. Nothing is as it appears. Guesses made as to Memmie's origin collapse, and all proof disappears in a haze of complicating doubts. For instance, the "negro" girl who accompanies Memmie into the woods of France is suddenly revealed as perhaps not being a "negro" at all, but rather a "white" girl painted black to enable her being sold into slavery. Similarly, Memmie is thought to be a "negro" at first, until it is discovered that her blackness is caused by dirt. Reality becomes a matter of appearance, and appearance becomes a series of signs that may disappear, like Memmie's dress and ornaments, or be manipulated at will:

> Upon my inquiring with more than ordinary anxiety about this dress, and their other ornaments, that I might the better find them out in certain figures in my possession, representing Esquimaux, she told me, that her first cloaths, arms, necklace, and pendants, were taken from her at M. d'Epinoy's: That there were some strange characters engraved on her arms, which perhaps might have led to a more particular discovery of her nation; but that all these things were preserved by M. d'Epinoy as a curiosity, at whose house she often saw them, and dressed herself in them sometimes. I was told, however, by M. de L------, that he never knew

anything of these arms ... (1768: 32-33).[21]

Physical and unmistakeable signs of Memmie's origins and identity are lost, beyond her own recovery through the medium of memory and language. The book acts out a reconstruction of the series of events that form Memmie's biography. These events are in themselves obscure and wordless until caught in the framework of the case history. The experiences of the wild are meaningless and incomprehensible. There is no meaning to Memmie's violent attack upon the "negro" girl who has been her only friend and companion:

> After finishing their repast, they directed their course into the country, leaving the river at their back. Soon after, she who is now become Madamoiselle Le Blanc, perceived the first a chaplet on the ground, which, no doubt, had been dropt by some passenger. Whether the novelty of the object delighted her, or whether it brought to her remembrance something of the same kind that she had seen before, is not known; but she immediately fell a dancing and exclaiming for joy: and being apprehensive lest her companion should deprive her of her little treasure, she stretched out her hand to take it up; upon which the other, with her baton, struck her so severe a stroke on the hand, that she lost use of it for some moments. She had, however, strength enough to return the blow on the forehead of her antagonist, with such a force as to knock her to the ground, screaming frightfully. The chaplet was the reward of her victory, of which she made herself a bracelet. Touched in the mean time, as it would seem, with compassion for her companion, whose wound bled very much, she ran in search of some frogs, and finding one, stripped off it's skin, which she spread on her forehead, to stop the blood, binding up the wound with the thread of the bark of a tree, which she peeled off with her nails. After this they separated; she that was wounded taking the road towards the river, and the victorious Le Blanc that towards Songi (*Savage Girl*, 1768: 10-11).[22]

The event occurs wordlessly, strangely, and then loses itself from the fabric of reality. The bludgeon vanishes, as does the "negro" girl herself, despite occasional sightings in the woods of France. The only existence of these events, and therefore their only authenticity, lies in Memmie's memory and in the text constructed from those memories. Yet Memmie herself is only equivocally present in the scene. She is still to become Mademoiselle Le

Blanc, and is still nameless and lost. By signalling her namelessness then, ("she who is now become Madamoiselle Le Blanc"), the narrator emphasises the split in Memmie's identity, being at once a self civilised and baptised, and also a "savage" without antecedents, without family, without those networks of association in which the self gains substance. The appearance of the chaplet with the memories that the narrator imagines it might be calling back only stresses again Memmie's/the "savage girl's" exile from a past which would form an origin and so substantiate the self. Memmie's memories remain liminally present, called up, as here and by the Esquimaux dolls, by the physical presence of objects. Yet this presence tantalisingly offers a history which the narrative itself is unable to flesh out. The movement of the scene is therefore one which intensifies Memmie's isolation and the fragility of our sense of her self. Her separation from her "camarade" is the obvious objectification of an inner loneliness. The nature of their union is revealed as one founded upon convenience, and ends with as little ceremony as is possible. (The English text's granting of a name to Memmie at this point of separation mistranslates the spirit of the original French, which continues to pointedly withold from her the cohesion of a name: she is not "Le Blanc", she is simply "la victorieuse" (*Savage Girl*, 1755: 15)).

Racine's account of this moment betrays the influence of Rousseau and Condillac. He describes Memmie's compassion in this way:

> Aussitôt, par ce mouvement de la nature qui nous porte à secourir nos semblables, elle va chercher un chène, et monte jusqu'au haut, espérant, m'a-t-elle dit, y trouver une gomme propre à guérir le mal qu'elle avoit fait (Racine, 1808, 5: 580)

Racine replaces the nightmare dissolution of social ties present in the text with a moment of sympathy, that one could see, through the ideas of Rousseau, as being the narcissistic

identification with the other which constitutes the foundation of society. Racine draws out from the text a moment that compromises its bleakness, transforming it into a limited validation of the idea of human society. There is more to this than the variety of response invited by any one text. Racine himself describes the "incertitude" (1808, 5: 577) of Memmie's story. What this presents is the image of a self, and of an account, in which meaning itself is apt to break apart. Working against this process is a desire to recast the fragments as another kind of story - one that echoes the origin of the politcal sphere, or the evolutionary origin of the human, or, most powerfully, the romance of a racial origin. The raw, inexplicable data of events are ordered as fantasies of an origin for the self.

The savage girl's displacement, her wordlessness after her discovery, her loss of her childhood language and memories all prevent her from becoming finally comprehensible to her investigators. Her country of origin is never conclusively found. Her story remains of necessity unsubstantiated. The point of origin is beyond being located and authenticated in the realm of discourses that by its very existence it is required to ratify. The point at which identity originates is lost in a circularity of unstable and disconnected language:

> I was informed by M. L------ that he heard a report about M. d'Epinoy's family, of the two little savages having been sold in some of the islands of America, where, being favourites of their mistress, but disliked by their master, the mistress was obliged to sell them again, and suffer them to be reimbarked either in the ship that had brought them, or in some other. These circumstances tally pretty well with those set forth in the letter already mentioned in the Mercury of France: But it is apparent, that these particulars arise altogether from conjectures more or less probable, formed upon the first signs and expressions that were obtained from the young girl, when she began to speak French, some months after being taken; and certainly so circumstantiate a relation founded on no better authority than signs, is very little to be depended on (*Savage Girl*, 1768: 28).[23]

Part Three - The Orang-Outang: Monboddo's Definition of the Human

For Monboddo, the feral child represents the relation of the human "essence" to the world of signs and discourses. For this reason, the elucidation of the place of the orang-outang as it appears in Monboddo's work on language and metaphysics proves an invaluable way to decipher the place of the feral child in his work, since the orang-outang further exemplifies the creation of a human essentiality. What Monboddo wishes to demonstrate in both his writing on Memmie and the orang-outang is the fact of humanity existing as an essence in those who, through silence or strangeness, appear to exist beyond the boundaries of the human. Monboddo extends the nature of the human into the "savage". This essential human nature exists in spite of the inability of linguistic signs to prove its presence. The very weakness of signs and the inadequacies of speech present in the discourses that surround Memmie Le Blanc argue for a definition of the human that will not rely on the authority of words. Instead, Memmie's signal presence, the fact of her existing within the bounds of the human is signalled by nothing else than her presence - a presence witnessed in words but nonetheless to be distinguished from them.

That there are problems with this view can be seen by a comparison of Monboddo's ideas with those of Henry Home, Lord Kames.[24] Kames's work is both anti-Linnæan and critical of Buffon, rejecting both the arbitrary distinctions of classification found in Linnæus and the evolutionary tendencies of Buffon. Where Monboddo extends his defintion of humanity to include the widest possible variety of human forms, Kames limits humanity by multiplying distinctions, most noticeably in declaring a separate origin for the native Americans (such an idea would form the basis of the polygenetic ideas of

racial theorists of the nineteenth century). What is particularly disturbing for our acceptance of Monboddo's ideas is that both writers base their opposite conclusions in the same method. Both Kames and Monboddo place our ability to tell animal species apart in a natural faculty that enables us to distinguish by visible marks (Kames, 1778: 16). Human identity resides in a surface, and in an observer's sense of the presence of that surface. That this sense of a presence leads Monboddo to incorporate and Kames to reject indicates its weakness.

To see how Memmie fits into the broader context of Monboddo's ideas we need to see how he used the orang-outang to further elucidate the idea of human nature, defining it by a process which imagines humanity in its primal essentiality. It is necessary first to delineate the history of the representation of the orang-outang before Monboddo. The slow process by which the "wild man" became identified with the orang-outang is best described as the outcome of an intervention by the methods of science in the domain of myth. An early exemplar of this shift from the mythological to the natural historical (in the modern sense) is Edward Tyson, a member of The Royal Society, whose work on the orang-outang and pygmie appeared in 1699.[25] Tyson's aim is to distinguish Truth from fable by finding a factual basis for the works of the imagination, particularly those of the Classical poets.

Tyson's other concern is to establish scientifically the boundaries between the human species and the "wild" and monstrous kinds of humanity. He sets out to do this by asserting that these monstrous species of mankind were in fact species of ape or monkey: "And tho' there are no such *Men*, as *Ctesias's Cynocephali*, and *Pygmies*; yet there are *Apes*, and *Monkeys*, and *Baboons*, that afforded him a ground for his Invention" (Tyson, 1699: 2: 44):

> That the *Pygmies* of the Antients were a sort of *Apes*, and not of *Humane Race*, I shall endeavour to prove in the following Essay. And if the *Pygmies* were only *Apes*, then in all probability our *Ape* may be a *Pygmie*; a sort of *Animal* so much resembling *Man*, that both the Antients and the Moderns have reputed it to be a *Puny Race* of Mankind, call'd to this day, *Homo Sylvestris*, The *Wild Man*; *Orang-Outang*, or a *Man* of the *Woods*; by the *Africans Quoius Morrou*; by other *Baris*, or *Barris*, and by the *Portugese*, the *Salvage* (Tyson, 1699, 1: 1).[26]

Tyson sets out to show that the iconographic representation of "wild men" and monstrous humanity draws upon a real resemblance between human beings and the animal species of apes.[27]

However, in the course of his attempts to show that the ape is the real basis of mythology concerning the several sorts of men, Tyson is drawn to make comparisons between the ape and human which tend to blur distinctions that he otherwise sets out to create. In discussing the Cynocephali, Tyson admits the possibility that they may be degenerated species of men, who by living in the wilds have lost their language and learning (Tyson, 1699, 2: 43). On two occasions Tyson describes the apes as being akin to children.[28] He observes that both orang-outang and pygmie "would make a Noise like a Child ..." (2: 11), and writes of the pygmie (Chimpanzee):

> ... I may hereafter have occasion to refer to some of the Particulars; But what is mentioned of it's *Cry*, like a Child's; and it's expressing the *Passions* of Joy and Grief, by making a Noise with it's Feet, is agreeable enough to the Relation I had of our *Pygmie*: For I heard it *Cry* my self like a *Child*; and he hath been often seen to kick with his Feet, as Children do, when either he was pleased or angered (Tyson, 1699, 1: 25).

This metaphor registers the area of confusion in which Tyson's investigation takes place. While intent upon denying the humanity of these creatures, the pygmy's strong resemblance to human (and especially child-like) behaviour leads him to discuss their actions in human terms. The "pygmy's" seeming ability to feel joy and grief, and its expression of these emotions in what is recognisably a conventional human manner,

cannot help but lead us to picture an animal possessing what are characteristics of human feeling.[29]

Between Tyson and Monboddo come the natural histories of Buffon and Linnæus. Carl Linnæus developed a taxonomy for determining species and genera in successive versions of his *Systema Naturæ*. The first edition was published in 1735 and the last Linnæan edition was printed in 1766-8. After Linnæus's death, editions continued to appear edited and organized by Johann Friedrich Gmelin. George Louis Le Clerc, Count de Buffon published his *Histoire Naturelle* in 1753, and then in many editions afterwards. Buffon argued against defining the multiplicity of nature in terms of arbitrary systems. Linnæus's classificatory impulse drew his work towards an elaboration of the natural world as immutable and distinguished by real boundaries. Buffon's work, like Monboddo's, is more interested in process and the ambiguities of distinctions. Buffon can be seen as one of the most significant eighteenth-century advocates of evolutionary thought, in which nature can be seen as a process, and not as an unchanging state.

Buffon's account of the orang-outang is dependent upon "The Strange Adventures of Andrew Battell", one of the voyages contained in *Purchas His Pilgrimes*.[30] Battell describes the Pongo and Engecko, two species of "Monsters" that he specifically separates from the ordinary apes and monkeys:

> The greatest of these two Monsters is called, Pongo, in their language; and the lesser is called, Engeco. This Pongo is in all proportion like a man, but that he is more like a Giant in stature, than a man; for he is very tall, and hath a man's face, hollow-eyed, with long haire upon his browes [...] They feed upon Fruit that they find in the Woods and upon Nuts, for they eate no kind of flesh. They cannot speak and have no understanding more than a beast (Purchas, 1905, 6: 398).

Buffon came across Battell's description of these ambiguous man-apes in the Abbé Prévost's French translation of Purchas. In his *Natural History*, Buffon equates the

"pongo" and the "jocko" with the orang-outang and chimpanzee respectively. Buffon describes the behaviour of an orang-outang that he had witnessed for himself:

> The orang-outang which I saw, walked always upright, even when it carried heavy burthens. Its air was melancholy, its deportment grave, its nature more gentle and very different from that of other apes. I have seen it sit at table, unfold its napkin, wipe its lips, make use of the spoon and the fork to carry the victuals to its mouth, pour out its drink into a glass, touch glasses when invited, take a cup and saucer and lay them on the table, put in sugar, pour out its tea, leave it to cool before drinking, and all this without any other instigation than the signs of the command of its master, and often of its own accord. It was gentle and inoffensive; it even approached strangers with respect, and came rather to receive caresses than to offer injuries ... (Buffon, 1791a, 1: 325).

This passage presents a litany of politeness in which successive clauses mount up to produce an incantatory effect. In the course of Buffon's rapt precision, we witness an enactment of a behaviour familiar to us now become both enchanted and strange. The ape, while summoning up the image of human mannerisms, destabilises the ready, unseeing acceptance of our behaviour specifically in the ordinariness of the scene. The ape which performs so correctly the etiquette of drinking tea not only reduces that etiquette to a bestial charade, but also elevates its action into a miraculous wonder. In this mirror of our own appearance that appearance may be glimpsed as both arbitrary and oddly ritualised. It is not simply that the orang-outang impresses us by his accomplishment of a human task, but also that our own accomplishment of this task reveals itself as a conventional acquisition.

Buffon is clear that the orang-outang is one of the great apes, and specifically rejects claims of humanity for it. However, his own descriptions of the orang, and those he draws from Henry Grose and Brosse, present an animal capable of showing sensitivity and delicacy. The orang covers its genitalia, "those parts ... which modesty forbids the sight of" (Buffon, 1791a, 1: 326), in an image that calls up a post-lapsarian shame.

Moreover, the orang is capable of grief, and, according to Grose, can die of a broken heart (Buffon, 1791a, 1: 326).

While Buffon's description of the orang's behaviour destabilizes our perception of the boundaries that exist between human and animal, the project of the great eighteenth-century natural historians was rather to establish and codify the essences and distinctions that separate species. The great exemplar of this quest for order was Charles Linnæus. That while Buffon blurs distinctions, Linnæus creates them is an outcome of their respective scientific and literary methods. Buffon's evolutionist stance writes a potential for instability in the natural world into his scientific and literary approach. The tendency of his description, as the passage on the orang-outang exemplifies, is for anecdote and narrative. His animals act as creatures in stories, and almost possess a human capacity for changefulness. Linnæus depicts primarily the static nature of an animal, and his work suggests a view of a creature held up to the eye and so separated from the work of time. His vignettes are not storyless, but rather suggest a moment with no before or after. This difference is well expressed in the introduction to the 1791 edition of Buffon's *The System of Natural History*:

> The one [Linnæus] has reduced natural history to the austere regularity of scientific method; while the other [Buffon] has displayed its materials in a loose order, and arrayed them in all the pomp of popular eloquence. The one has formed a new classification, and invented a new system of technical language, as apparatus for his favourite science: the other in compliance with the taste of his country, and the turn of his genius, has endeavoured to strip natural history of whatever is remote from popular expression and popular ideas, and to teach her those blandishments which invite and insinuate, and attract the notice, and even the regard of the gay, the careless, and the indolent (Buffon, 1791a, 1: iv).[31]

This rather anti-French comparison is palpably unfair to Buffon, but may also play false to the spirit of Linnaeus's work. The introductory material to the *Systema Naturæ* often

moves into a visionary register:

> Awakened, as if from a dream of ignorance, I have seen darkly, as he passed, the Eternal, Infinite, Omniscient, Almighty God, and am amazed! I have read of him in some traces of his wondrous works, the smallest of which, though comparatively insignificant, even to a degree of nothingness, evinces the most incomprehensible perfection of Power and Wisdom (Linnæus, 1792: 17).

What we read in Linnæus is a visionary sense worked into the discipline of order. Yet that order itself is visionary, bearing witness to the plenitude of existence, the divine perfection of things as they are.

In Linnæus's classification of primates, the orang-outang is placed firmly in the order of "Simia". Yet in this division the orang continues to play an ambiguous and destabilising role:

> 2. Orang-outang. - *2.* Simia Satyrus. I
> Has no tail. Is of a rusty brown colour; the hair on the fore-arms is reversed, or stands upwards; and the buttocks are covered with hair. Amoen. acad. vi. 68. tab. lxxvi. f. 4.
> Homo sylvestris, or wild man of the woods. Edwards, av. v. 6. tab. 213. - Orang-utang. Camper kort beright, &c. Amsterdam 1788, p. 8.
> Inhabits the island of Borneo. - Is about two feet high, and walks mostly erect. The body and limbs are universally covered with brown hair, about an inch long, which is thinly interspersed with reddish hairs; the hair on the fore-arms, towards the wrists, is reversed, or lies with its points turned towards the elbow; the buttocks are covered with hair: The head is round, having a naked forehead; the margin of the mouth is hairy, the eye-lashes are black, the upper being longer and thicker than those below, and a range of transversely placed hairs occupies the place of eye-brows: The nose is very short, and is covered with down: The palms of the hands are smooth, and the thumb is shorter than the palm; the feet resemble those of man, except that the great toes are considerably shorter than the others, which are very long.
> Much as this species resembles mankind, even possessing the os hyoides, it must still be referred to the genus of Ape, with which it agrees in wanting the flat round nail of the great toes, and in the structure of the larynx; besides those circumstances, it is evident, from the direction of the muscles, and from the whole figure of the skeleton, that the animal is not designed by nature for an erect posture (Linnæus, 1792: 56).

It should be clear from this description that Linnæus was under no doubt as to whether

the orang-outang was a member of the human species or not. However, confusion remains. Through the semantic and scientific identification of the orang-outang with the homo sylvestris, or wild man of the woods, the orang could be placed on both sides of the divide. Linnaeus' "Four-footed, mute, hairy" "*Wild Man*" (*A General System of Nature*, translated by William Turton, London: Lackington, Allen and Co., 1802, 1: 9) could wrongly be felt to include the orang in the context of the human species.

In a letter to Sir John Pringle, dated 16 June 1773, Lord Monboddo employs the authority of Linnaeus for his own belief in the humanity of the orang-outang.[32] Monboddo's defence of our own kinship to the orang is crucial for the understanding of the relation of "the child of nature" and feral child to society. To understand Monboddo's position better it is advisable to examine the orang-outang's place in his two major philosophical works.

Monboddo's six volume study *Of The Origin and Progress of Language* sets out to develop four connected arguments. Firstly, Monboddo intends to show that language is not natural to humanity but is acquired. Secondly, it argues that society precedes language, creating the conditions for its institution. Thirdly, it follows Aristotle in arguing that animals being divided into solitary and gregarious, political and non-political, humanity possesses a middle nature in expressing both sides of these binary oppositions. Finally, Monboddo depicts language as arising from the use of inarticulate cries. The orang is necessary for Monboddo's argument in manifesting a human species that is social and yet has no speech. The existence of the orang is therefore material evidence for the first two of Monboddo's theses.[33]

Monboddo's definition of language is "*the expression of the conceptions of the mind by articulate sounds*" (Monboddo, 1773, 1: 5). Monboddo argues that as language

is not natural, "ideas" are similarly acquired through social intercourse and convention. However, while the ideas that human beings seek to express in language are not essential to the human, the moulding force that creates the human is innate. The human being and the domain which it creates emerges from a gradation or succession of states of being, the mind developing from sensation to retention and imagination.

Monboddo considers language to be the "sign" of an idea "and that it is the weakness of our intellect which obliges us to take that assistance from sense" (1773, 1: 119). He goes on to argue that our reliance on the sign does not mean there are *only* signs (1: 119-120). In our perception of the sign we attend not to the word or the sound as such but to the intangible idea which is momentarily signified.

To complicate this further, Monboddo suggests that language is *material*, that is it consists of sounds, and *formal*, that is it expresses ideas. These "ideas" are, as I have said, acquired and are the result of artifice, habitual connection, social convention, and the formations of language itself. Monboddo is certain that our sense of individual things is thereby subordinated to our classifications of the individual in the manner formed by our ideas. The artifice of language therefore prevents the apprehension of things as they are in themselves. Individual things or persons may only be perceived in relation to the system which classifies them, specifically the system of language.

Monboddo's insistence that society must precede language implies a philosophical confusion in his own thought. Society being identical to the artificial frame in which language subscribes and codifies experience, they require each other as each side of an arching bridge requires the other for material support. Humanity in Monboddo's reading should become social and language-using simultaneously. Both society and language require the existence of a shared set of rules and conventions prior to their existence. Yet

in order to exist, shared conventions and rules need the binding order of language and society.

Monboddo's interest in the feral child and the idea of "the child of nature" therefore reveal his awareness of the circular complexity of this problem. The "state of nature" being pre-political and pre-linguistic focuses our attention on the impossibility of its own ending. The state of nature can only cease through artifice, the creation of a framed human realm as signified in the Romulus myth of the foundation of the city walls. Monboddo's solution is that the state of nature ends in the course of a developmental process, during which humanity passes through a series of imperceptible and minute changes. This evolutionary model remains an unsatisfactory device to solve the problem of defining what distinguishes the uniqueness of humanity, since it leaves the question open as to which of these minute changes separates the human from the animal.[34] The more radical solution of disavowing human uniqueness was of course explicitly rejected by Monboddo.

In terms that echo Turgot, Monboddo argues that the very fact that society progresses, shows its difference from the natural:

> The progress in civil society, and the many changes and revolutions it is subject to, plainly shew, that it is not from nature, but of human institution. For *nature* is permanent and unchangeable, like its *author*: and accordingly the wild animals, who are undoubtedly in a state of nature, still preserve the same œconomy and manner of life with no variation, except such as change of circumstances may make absolutely necessary from the preservation of the individual or the species; and the variation goes no farther than that necessity requires (Monboddo, 1773, 1: 245-6).

Using the same point of contrast in the animal kingdom, Monboddo points out that society can be seen to pre-date language in the fact that animals associate without speech. This is undoubtedly so but points to a failure to distinguish the social from the political, and the

necessary from the gratuitous.[35] Monboddo may be right in suggesting that humans may associate as animals do, and this association may indeed necessitate the formulation of a language to facilitate their joint ability to strengthen as a group their individual weakness. However, the artifice of language is such that its existence regulates human association on the assumption of kinship and a common aim. It is the regulation of human communality through speech that distinguishes it from the association of bees and ants. Words are not just command or request, but a system which frames the possibility of other kinds of speech.

In other words, it is the kind of speech that distinguishes humans from animals. The impersonal speech of necessary communication is indeed little different from the honey-bee's dance or the mating calls of wild animals. It is the voluntary nature of human language, which enables a person to enter into communication gratuitously, that signals a union made possible in its artifice. Again like the changing structure of society the changing form of human language reveals its status as artifice. That words are subject to change, and can possess a history in time apart from their synchronic existence in a momentary system expresses their ability to frame human relationships, and to change with the changing conventions of that union.

For Monboddo language corresponds to the necessity of regulation produced by the institution of society. Moreover, language institutes the human race as such (Monboddo, 1773, 1: 1-2). The origin of speech is coeval with the origin of humanity, because it is at the moment at which language comes into being that the human gives itself up to the fabrication of its own world. Without language human beings would be merely animals. In elaborating on this model of things, Monboddo connects the life of the individual from childhood to maturity to this human progress conducted through

language:

> From this *birth* of human nature, as it may be called, we will endeavour to trace its progress to its state of *maturity*. This progress, in the individual, is very well known; but we propose here to exhibit the species itself in its *infancy*, - first mute; then lisping and stammering; next by slow degrees learning to speak, very lamely and imperfectly at first; but at last, from such rude essays, forming an art the most curious, as well as the most useful among men (Monboddo, 1773, 1: 2).

Monboddo follows this recapitulatory model through his work, particularly using it to focus the question as to the moment of division between the rational human and the animal. Monboddo depicts the "state of nature" as a condition in which the human exists only as matter. In this material condition, the human being enters into the world of ideas through "the medium of sense and matter" (Monboddo, 1773, 1: 127). This condition of immanent materiality corresponds to humanity's nature as an animal and to its state at the moment of birth (1773, 1: 127).

In order to pursue the growth of the human from this bestial condition to its rational end, Monboddo returns both to the infancy of the individual and to "infants of our own species" (1773, 1: 131), that is to say "savages".[36] In following the individual and the species out of this purely physical state, Monboddo asserts that it memory forms from the experience of sensations, thereby creating the conditions for the rational human animal, no longer bound to its own beginnings in matter.

This model of human progress represents a human species or individual that, although born with the capacity for being human, does not lay claim to that exalted condition naturally. The state of full humanity is acquired. In Monboddo's model of human development, at some point in the series of subtle and minute gradations by which the animal rises upwards to reason, a dividing line is crossed. The orang-outang exists on or before or after this point of separation, and to understand its nature is to examine by

implication that which defines the human. The orang fills the interval or gap which lies between ourselves and the animal world. For Monboddo, the finite system of the chain of being abhors a vacuum, and wishes to fill every space with things that look backwards to that which they have emerged from, and forwards to that which they aspire to. In this way, the orang embodies not only the animal nature of humanity, but also yearns towards the social and rational condition to which it will progress. The orang exists in a state prior to that of language, and therefore is nearly human. Its silence is the one point of separation.[37]

Considering Monboddo's *Antient Metaphysics* (Edinburgh and London: 1779-99), we find a philosophical work which sets out to follow the progress of the human species already outlined in the work on the origin of language.[38] Monboddo examines the early history of the human species through a consideration of, among other things, the orang-outang, reports of feral children (including Memmie Le Blanc), and travellers' tales of "savages" and monstrous kinds of humanity (Monboddo, 1779-99, 3: ii-iii).

In making this history of the species, Monboddo creates a model of humanity that is specifically antagonistic to the work of post-Newtonian science. Rather than a world which is a mechanism in which our bodies act mechanistically, Monboddo imagines a universe moved by the power of "mind", in which the principle of energy and reason in a thing acts so as to realise that thing's essence in time. Monboddo's psychologism is therefore consciously directed against Locke and Hume, despite the points of similarity which will have already become apparent in the course of this chapter. His work can be seen as a return to a neo-Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy intended to refute a Humean scepticism.

"Mind" ascends through the chain of being. "Mind" is the root of all things in

nature, an *anima mundi* (Monboddo, 1779-99, 6: 283), and is "in incessant active energy in matter, that is to say, one Supreme Mind, and under it an indefinite number of finite minds" (Knight, 1900: 35). It pervades all nature, giving it motion. Monboddo asserts that there is a vegetable as well as an animal mind. All kinds of "mind" are contained within the human, who possesses a vegetable, animal, and rational soul, and can ascend from a merely vegetable nature to a contemplation of the divine. The Aristotelian root of Monboddo's philosophy is apparent, stressing as it does the "entelechy" of a thing, that is its actuality which is revealed in its history. Humanity in directing and co-operating with this process of revelation is represented as "an animal who is not such as he came out of the hands of his Creator, and who may be said to have made himself" (Monboddo, 1779-99, 6: 280). For this reason, Monboddo can comfortably declare the full humanity of the orang or the feral child, since both simply embody an earlier stage in the history of humanity. A static and unchanging definition of the human inevitably requires fixed limits of absolute difference. In a theory dedicated to change, these limits are bound to appear more porous and open.

Mind ascends a chain of being which maps out the possibilities of existence. In terms that echo the processes of Linnæus's classification, Monboddo imagines a world in which nothing is lost, in which every movement of nature is purposefully directed in an upward ascent. Mind becomes what "Nature" is for Linnaeus, an operating principle which brings all things to the accomplishment of their own perfection (Linnæus, 1792: 19).

In this later work Monboddo is clearer as to what differentiates humanity from the animals. He considers this to be the consciousness of self, that the human being is a "knower" (Knight, 1900: 37).[39] Moreover the human capacity for knowledge of its self

as a knower is capable of development. Through the perceptions of sense the human being knows the shadow of things, and can rise to the apprehension of truths and ideas underived from sense, that is the categories of pure thought. Interestingly, in the account of the "savage girl", the anonymous author presents Memmie as being without self-consciousness in the woods:

> Madamoiselle Le Blanc acknowledges, that she did not begin to reflect till after she had made some progress in her education; and that during her life in the woods, she had scarcely any other ideas than a sense of her wants, and a desire to satisfy them (*Savage Girl*, 1768: 25).[40]

Although, this draws upon Memmie's own testimony, it is easy to detect here the influence of Descartes and Condillac's *Traité des Animaux* (Amsterdam: 1755). Presumably Monboddo would not have wished to draw a conclusion that Memmie was as an animal while she was in the wilds, since he wished above all to broaden the definition of the human by rewriting that definition as a history, a process of change. What Monboddo raises here is the possibility of self-reflection without the mediation of language. Alternatively, this moment may allude to a further split in Monboddo's work, echoing the contradictions concerning progress and degeneracy. In this case, we witness Monboddo attempting to define humanity as something distinct and separate, while being unable to define such a distinction without leaving out of the definition those groups which he wishes to see as unequivocally "human", that is the feral child and the orang-outang. In this way, Monboddo exemplifies the confusions of thought brought up by the feral child. The child of nature exists in such a way as to render the definition of the human unstable, just as it calls out for an attempt to re-order such a definition.

Rather than solving this problem, Monboddo drew out of his evolutionary discourse a metaphor which would enact the relation between the child and the "savage",

and so imaginatively recreate the analogy between the feral child and an image of human origins. Monboddo's philosophy, like Locke's, bases itself in a model of the psychology of human development, as it progresses from infancy to maturity. Monboddo represents this development as a process of self-exploration, the institution of this process signalling the precise moment in time when the human ceases to be merely animal.[41] The beast possesses only sense; the human knows sense and the ideas that arise from it.

For Monboddo, the orang-outang and the feral child represent the state of nature by actually living in that condition. Monboddo presumes that the examination of their lives will reveal directly information concerning the origins and early history of humanity. From their actions he finds the proof of human behaviour in the state of nature. For example, from the story of Peter the Wild Boy, Monboddo deduces the lack of language in the state of nature, and from the two wild children of Cruwyt in Devonshire he establishes that once humans went on all-fours.[42] He divides the progress of humanity into three stages: the most primitive he depicts in the story of Peter, the Wild Boy; the approach to the human moves one step onwards in the orang-outang; and the state just prior to full humanity he represents in the story of Memmie Le Blanc.

This ascent of consciousness is the same process which raises humanity from the "state of nature":

> I begin, then, this Philosophy of Man, by considering him in his natural state, which must be the foundation of any acquired or adventitious state he may afterwards appear in. And here it is proper to explain what I mean by a state of nature; for it is a term that may be used in two senses, very different. It may denote either his most perfect state, to which his nature tends, and towards which he either is or ought to be always advancing [...] And this is the most proper meaning of the natural state of Man; for the natural state of every thing is that state to which, by nature, it tends [...] Or it is the state from which this progression begins. It is in this sense that I use the term, denoting by it the original state of Man, before societies were formed, or arts invented. This state, I think may also be called a

> state of Nature, in contradistinction to the state in which we live at present, which, compared with it, is certainly an artificial state. In such a state, I say, Man had not the use of Intellect, which was then latent or dormant in him, as it is in a child among us, till it was produced by the intercourse of society, and the invention and practice of Arts. Man, therefore, in that state, could be nothing but a mere Animal, without cloaths, houses, the use of fire, or even speech. In such a state, it is certainly most proper to consider his Animal Nature, because we have it there pure, and unmixed with the Intellectual, and the Arts from thence derived; for the state we are in at present is so mixed of Nature and Art, that it is exceedingly difficult to say what is Nature in us, and what is Art (Monboddo, 1779-99, 3: 26-27).

The state of nature that Monboddo describes here as the origin and terminus of human development is the basis of his philosophy. Intriguingly, the ordinary child can exemplify that origin. He creates a point of difference in humanity as it is known among us and as it is imagined as existing in the condition of the state of nature. Humanity was natural, bestial, lacking in language, and childlike; now it is artificial, intellectual, endowed with speech, and engaged in a continuing process of maturity.

The formulation of these differences allows Monboddo the possibility of change within the human condition. Through the establishment of a point from which we have emerged, he creates also the fiction of a point to which we are heading. In this way, Monboddo frees mankind from the human condition, which he reveals as not an unchanging and unchangeable state, but a momentary point in the process of a development. This enables a serious sense of freedom within the structures of a history, which is shown to be the outward sign of a long chain of growth. The very fact of suffering within the present can be accommodated by a vision of its eventual end. The state of nature in the sense of origin is therefore inextricably linked to the state of nature in the sense of man's most fitting condition:

> ... I could not reconcile the miserable state in which Men are now to be found in almost all the nations of the known world, the more miserable the

> more the nations are civilized, with the administration of a wise and a good God, otherwise than by showing that Man is in this life in a state of progression, from the mere Animal to the Intellectual Creature ... (Monboddo, 1779-99, 3: 69).[43]

Inevitably, Monboddo's philosophy, and the reading of Memmie Le Blanc that it inspired, depends upon a paradox. The "state of nature" acts as a sign of the essential self, that state of being closest to the dictates of "nature". In terms which repeat the nature-culture division already present in the representation of the "wild man", this natural self is then revealed as tending towards a fulfillment of human nature which begins with a move away from the "state of nature". The first step of this progress of "mind" means divorcing the human individual from the origin which constitutes his or her natural self. It is here that Monboddo's faith in the ascent of "mind" and his equally passionately held belief in the decay of human beings can be seen to awkwardly coalesce. Humanity both falls from a perfection which is commensurable with its existence in the "state of nature" and moves back by natural inclination towards a regaining of that perfection that it has lost. The essential contradiction in Monboddo's philosophy thereby attempts an inner coherence, indulging at once his Christian optimism and his primitivist pessimism - although this attempt founders upon the further belief that humanity was at its perfection in the age of the Greek heroes.

This idea of human progress locks the orang-outang into a moment in the upwards motion of our development from beast to human. The Aristotelian philosophy of "mind" therefore reveals itself as inextricably linked to a recapitulatory model of human change.[44] At numerous points in his speculations Monboddo draws the analogy between the history of the species and of the individual. The human ascends from the animal and hence purely material element, which is explicitly equated with the nature of the "savage" and the child.

For instance, Monboddo equates the distance of a nation from the state of nature with an individual's age dating from the moment of birth (Monboddo, 1779-99, 3: 68-69). He represents the child developing from an animal to an intellectual being (1779-99, 3: 28). Following this stage the adolescent develops, like the race, into a social and political being. The fact of human growth from infancy to maturity is used to accommodate the reader to an idea of development from the orang-outang to human:

> There are, I know, many, who will think this progress of man, from a quadruped and an Ourang Outang to men such as we see them now a days, very disgraceful to the species. But they should consider their own progress as an individual. In the womb, man is no better than a vegetable; and, when born, he is at first more imperfect, I believe, than any other animal in this same state, wanting almost altogether that comparative faculty, which the brutes, young and old, possess. If therefore, there be such a progress in the individual, it is not to be wondered that there should be a progress also in the species, from the mere animal up to the intellectual creature: But, on the contrary, I should think it not agreeable to that wonderful order and progression of things that we observe in nature, if it were otherwise; for the species, with respect to the genus, is to be considered as an individual ... (Monboddo, 1779-99, 4: 32-33).

The recapitulatory argument places the species in an ordered world, where each stage emerges from that which went before, leading the species, conceived as an individual, towards the fulfilment of its own excellence. Both species and individual progress as it were up the same path, heading to a summation. Understood in this way, each stage of this process manifests the individual's and the species' condition of development, and though imperfect in itself displays the inevitability of the perfection that it will grow into.

The Aristotelian origin of this defence is certain.[45] Monboddo draws from Aristotle the notion of potentiality. The Aristotelian definition of humanity that Monboddo makes use of depends upon the notion of capacity, that is that as a condition of their nature, human beings include within their self that which they shall become. In this way Aristotle "has not only properly defined man, but in his definition given a kind

of history of the species, carrying it on from the first beginning of it, to its completion and perfection in intellect and science" (Monboddo, 1779-99, 4: 24).

The recapitulatory metaphor is based in analogy: the life of the human resembles the life of the species, the latter being understood in terms of the individual. It is through the nature of this resemblance that the human being absorbs its own history as an individual, and furthermore the history of all creation. In this evolutionary model, we see the restitution of the microcosm, and one way in which the influence of this idea filtered into the post-Darwinian theories of the late nineteenth century.

The human being contains all nature; all the scale of things that led up to their present state is contained within them, as is all that they will become. This process of becoming is conducted through a perception of resemblance: the human being knows by experience the condition of lower minds and natures, and by an awareness of analogy they perceive the nature of minds higher than themselves. In the awareness of the processes of consciousness, the self knowing itself as a knower, the mind reaches up to the condition of similar but higher intelligences. These processes of analogy are the motivating force which guides the development of the human.

To conclude this section we should reconsider the place of Memmie and the orang-outang in Monboddo's delineation of the human. In the orang-outang, Monboddo considered a creature in every way resembling a human being, and yet popularly supposed not to be human. Monboddo rejects this idea with the response that where resemblance exists there must also be an essential identity.

This leads him to consider the faculty of imitation. Monboddo considers that progress in the realm of human behaviour (framed as it is by artifice and custom) depends upon imitation, that is the conscious intention to repeat and resemble the actions of others.

Monboddo is clear that it is our faculty of imitation that establishes our human domain:

> There is one thing belonging to Man in his natural state, which deserves our particular attention, and that is, his faculty of imitation, which is greater in him than in any other animal: For other animals, we see, imitate, some by gesture only, others by voice only; but Man imitates both ways, and not only the actions and qualities of Body, but the sentiments and passions of Mind; for he can assume a character, and become another man. It is, therefore, undoubtedly true, what Aristotle says, "That man is the most imitative of all animals;" and likewise what he adds, "That it is by imitation that he first learns." And, indeed, I hold that this imitative faculty has been the origin of all the arts of life: It is by it that he has learned to build, to weave, to sing, and even to speak ... (Monboddo, 1779-99, 3: 219).

Monboddo goes on to describe how language itself depends upon this imitative faculty, that our knowledge of words begins and develops through repetition and the perception of resemblance created in that repetition. While it is this imitation and perception of resemblance that creates the human artifice, its tendency is to reveal the world as one framed in appearances rather than essences. As the example of the assumption of a character through imitation suggests, (that we may "become another man") the identity of a thing, or of the individual, shows itself as fundamentally unstable, an essence that can vanish in the perception of resemblance.

The orang raises this spectre of a resemblance so striking as to call into question the identity which it resembles. Monboddo's orang, with its sense of honour, social life, and polite manners (Monboddo, 1779-99, 4: 27-33), is so convincingly and flatteringly human as to lead the reader to conclude that if the human being was an animal, it would be just such an animal as this. This principle of analogy is fundamental to our understanding of the figure of the child of nature. By having existed silently, Memmie proves for Monboddo that humanity resides not in the exchange of words, but in certain kinds of behaviour which are, by resemblance or imitation, felt by the observer to be

human. Through the external nature of the human body, as through the external enactment of "human" behaviour, we can know the other as human. Knowledge is therefore in a limited sense possible through analogy, or the analogical faculties of metaphor and resemblance. The thing in itself not being capable of appearing in the world except in another form, can therefore be comprehended only through a convention of familiarity, through its resemblance to another kind of thing.

The idea of the state of nature and the imaginative representation of its condition and of the moment of its ending are in this way inextricably connected to the impossibility of defining the human being as a thing in itself. In a letter to James Harris, the writer on language, dated June 8, 1769, Monboddo sums up one strand of post-Hobbesian thought regarding the knowledge of individuals:

> Under this head of relation therefore I should think it not improper to treat of this prime faculty of the human mind, the foundation of all our knowledge. For *discursus mentis* begins first, as is natural, with individuals, then it proceeds to general ideas, next to propositions, and last of all to syllogisms, with which is concluded the discursive operation of the mind. And it might be observed that the nature of human Knowledge is such that we know nothing absolutely, or as it is in itself, but only by relation to other things. For as I said before there is no knowledge, or science of individuals. We only know things through the Species and Genera. And these ideas are formed by comparing things together, and observing their likenesses and differences. This comparative faculty is, if I mistake not, what made the ancients denominate man a logical animal (Knight, 1900: 56).

This does not just mean that our sense of individual things is subordinate to our classification of that individual according to our ideas or our words. Often definitions as such make us uneasy, for on one level we perceive the world as containing no abstract ideas, but only particular presences. What Monboddo alludes to is that our perception of variety occurs within an understanding of similarity. In *Antient Metaphysics*, Monboddo describes the human ascent from the chaos of nature through the systematisation of our

perceptions through the formulation of ideas in language (1779-99, 4: 65-66). Our initial perception in the state of nature is of a world of things in which each thing is purely a thing in itself. This world of absolutes is a chaos because the human requires the formulation of systems, of principles enshrined in language which will order the world and make the chaos of absolute presences cohere.

The orang-outang, as exemplar of the state of nature, defines the human by existing as an analogy to the human, in that resemblance to human behaviour already remarked upon. This idea of the resemblance to the human is traditional in the representation of the monkey and ape. A Latin Bestiary of the twelfth century makes this connection explicit: "Simie vocant laune sermone eo quo multa mort similitudo rationii humane tentat" ("They are called *simia* in the latin language because people notice a great similitude to human reason in them") (M.R. James, 1928: 4).[46] In his *Natural History*, Pliny writes that: "All the kind of these Apes approach nearest of all beasts, to the resemblance of a man's shape" (2: 231). In the seventeenth century, Dr. Nicholas Tulp remarked upon the human likeness of the orang-outang, and considered it as an origin of the humanoid satyr (Goldsmid, 1886, 1: 31-46; Huxley, 1863: 7).

Precisely because they allow for no distinction between appearance and being, the orang-outang and the feral child question our ~~ability~~ abilities to define the human. Moreover, as I have already suggested, the definition of the human is one of the relation between the individual and the abstraction of the class. The word "human" must cover all particular examples of "humanity": it implies a common human nature, an essence which each human being possesses. What if such a concept of human nature is not felt to exist? The word "human" would become either nonsensical, or fictional, in the sense that the idea which it expressed was felt to be a necessary lie. There would be only particular individual

persons, or, more likely, numerous sub-sets, or ghettoes, of "humanity."

The orang-outang and the child of nature raise, simply by existing, this problem in defining the human. We can recall here that the only time Linnæus incorporated actual individuals into his system of classification is when he listed the particular example of "homo ferens". The child of nature expresses the idea of an absolute essence of human nature, but this essence is felt as antagonistic to society and to the realm of artifice and convention that make up social life. If a common human nature exists, then the child of nature shows that this primal and essential mode of existence can not be made to appear in social terms. In the case of the orang-outang this is because its translation into the conventions of artificial life result only in the disruption of the agreed set of assumptions that enable that life.

The child of nature resists structure, because it cannot be as it is and be embodied in the lasting artifice of the human domain. Its very nature as innocence and essence would cease to be once it entered the relative world of compromise and communication. It is this essential antagonism against the idea of permanence that directs the child of nature against authority: its radical state of newness is in itself revolutionary. It was to be the potentially revolutionary nature of the feral child that was to emerge in the next major case history, that of "The Wild Boy of Aveyron".

Part Four - Myths of Race

There is much in Monboddo and in the accounts of Memmie Le Blanc that prefigures the beginnings of "race theory". In this way, Monboddo's work, even while it states categorically the eighteenth-century idea of the feral child, looks forward to the nineteenth-century development - the move from a doctrine of universal humanity to a series of differentiations founded in "race difference". Monboddo states classically the idea of the universally human. However, certain processes at work in his text can be seen to lead to a view of humanity hostile to the author's own explicit intentions.

This is shown most clearly by a comparison with the work of Charles White, a surgeon and amateur naturalist, most famous for his writings on the treatment of pregnant women. White's *An Account of the Regular Gradation in Men, and in Different Animals and Vegetables; And from the Former to the Latter* (London: 1799) follows Monboddo in displaying a preoccupation with the orang-outang. He lists the "human" behaviour of the orang-outang and the "golok" (Great Gibbon), commenting on their closeness to the human:

> All those who have had opportunities of making observations on the orang-outangs, agree in ascribing to them, not only a remarkable docility of disposition, but also actions and affections similar to those observable in the human kind ... They discover signs of modesty: and instances are related of the strongest attachments of the male to the female. When sick, these animals have been known to suffer themselves to be blooded, and even to invite the operation; and to submit to other necessary treatment, like rational creatures [...] They have been taught to play upon musical instruments, as the pipe and harp. They have been known to carry off negro-boys, girls, and even women, with a view of making them subservient to their wants as slaves, or as objects of brutal passion: and it has been asserted by some, that women have had offspring from such connections (White, 1799: 33-34).

Furthermore, the whole work repeats Monboddo's idea of an evolutionary chain of being, using Bonnet's "Idea of a Scale of Natural Beings" arranged in such a way as to create an idea of ascent and descent along proscribed paths of growth or decay:

> That there is a general gradation from man through the animal race; from animals to vegetables, and through the whole vegetable system. By gradation, I mean the various degrees in the powers, faculties, and organization. The gradation from man to animals is not by one way; the person and actions descend to the orang-outang, but the voice to birds, as has been observed (White, 1799: 39).

This last comment concerns White's belief that the lower boundaries of the human merge with the higher apes, birds which can gain the power of speech, and elephants, by virtue of their enjoying "the faculty of reason in an eminent degree" (1799: 35). Aside from White's own idiosyncrasies, this more or less reproduces Monboddo's idea of a chain of being in which the human begins equivocally in the feral child and the orang-outang. White even gives a series of plates which depict exaggeratedly humanised apes; for instance, making Tyson's drawing of the pygymy look more human, giving it a stick to assist its upright posture.

Where White differs from Monboddo is in laying far greater stress on the gradations that exist within the genus "homo". White arranges human beings along an ascending scale based on race. He presents John Hunter's hierarchical arrangement of human skulls: "On viewing this range, the steps were so exceedingly gradual and regular, that it could not be said that the first differed from the second more than the second from the third, and so on until the end" (1799: 41). Nonetheless White believes that this imperceptible blending shows an unmistakable descent when arranged in order, the skulls re-affirming a racial hierarchy which places the European at the summit and the African at the bottom, the latter supposedly resembling most closely the skull of the monkey.

Similar "scientific" methods conspire to place the "negro" at the level of the ape.

The racism of the text is of course not a new thing, and the obvious context of the book is the discontent over the slave trade. In fact, surprisingly, White argues for the abolition of slavery (1799: 137-8): the biological is still to be accounted distinct from the political and the spiritual. It was the erosion of this boundary that was to determine the direction of race theory in the nineteenth century.

In White, we see Monboddo's evolutionary thought turning into a hierarchical understanding of humanity viewed through the idea of race. However, it is the combination of this image of a series of gradations working through the human species with Monboddo's idea of recapitulation that is to seal the image of the child as "savage" and transform the later nineteenth-century image of the feral child.

It is difficult to find a determining moment at which an idea implicit in previous discourse is finally fully stated, and so enters the realm of the familiar. The connection between the child and the "savage" is tacitly and sometimes explicitly present in writings dating back to, at least, the sixteenth century. However, it is the recasting of this resemblance or metaphorical analogy as scientific fact that demarcates a precise alteration in human understanding both of the child and of the "savage". This point of change can be located precisely in the work of the early nineteenth-century race theorists and phrenologists.

In an appendix "Phrenological Remarks" to Samuel George Morton's *Crania Americana* (Philadelphia and London: 1839), George Combe states clearly the link between the child and the "savage":

> The size of the national skulls indicates the dimension of the brains which they contained. The influence of size in the brain on national character may be judged of from the following facts.

> *First*. The brain of a child is small, and its mind is weak. As the brain grows in size and attains to maturity in structure, the mental manifestations increase in
> vigor.
> *Secondly*. A small brain is one but not the only cause of idiocy. A brain may be enlarged by disease and idiocy ensue; but if this organ be too small, although it be healthy in structure, idiocy is an invariable consequence. Phrenologists have in vain called on their opponents to produce a single instance of the mind being manifested vigorously by a very small brain [...]
> *Thirdly*. Individuals and nations distinguished for great aggregate force of mind, animal, moral and intellectual, have had large brains. King Robert the Bruce, Cuvier, Canova, Burns the poet, Dr. Gall and Dr. Spurzheim, among men, and the Teutonic race compared with the Hindoo among nations may be cited as examples (1839: 275-6).

The analogy being drawn here firmly indicates that the "small brained races", i.e. those of non-European origin, are stuck physiologically in the condition of childhood. The child's brain is small and weak, and for the duration of its childhood, it presumably remains in a condition akin to idiocy. A series of equivalents is being worked out here that will gather force as the century progresses: the child as "savage"; the "savage" as child; childhood as idiocy; "savagery" as idiocy.

In Combe, Morton, Gobineau and others, we witness the transformation of an image which had earlier been purely analogical. For the writers of the Enlightenment, the recapitulation metaphor belonged to a universalism. The adult who witnesses his own infancy in the child, also detects his own history in the "savage". The most severe consequence of this is the legitimization of a paternalistic empire. However, implicit in the concept is the commonality of the human: if the "savage" is to the European as the child is to the adult, then this leads us into a recognition of our identity with the origin. The pseudo-scientific development of this idea in the nineteenth century, a moment hesitated before in White, is one in which the recapitulatory metaphor indicates difference and not identity. The Chinese or the Indians possess civilisation according to the

development of their kind; the "Indian" and the "Negro" lack civilisation for the same reason. Races, like individuals, progress as far as they can given the differences that they innately possess. The race theorists accentuate difference in order to assume a mask of tolerance. However, finally, their rejection of a common humanity paves the way for the most extreme versions of racism and "racial hygiene", particularly in Gobineau, where the identification of the "nation" with the "race" rewrites the basis of political life.

In terms of the feral child, the shift from incorporation to difference marks a significant change in the modes of representation. The racially tinged idea of the feral child would not make its appearance until the late nineteenth century. However, its roots are here in the end of the eighteenth century. The emphasis on race in the accounts of Memmie Le Blanc act as a sign-post for later developments, intertwining the image of the feral child with the history of racial oppression, emerging fully in the writings of Rudyard Kipling and Edgar Rice Burroughs.

LE SAUVAGE DE L'AVEIRON.

Etant vû Cheminer tant au corps qu'à la tête.

CHAPTER FOUR

RADICAL INNOCENCE: THE WILD BOY OF AVEYRON AND THE STATE OF NATURE

Part One - The Compassion Instinct: The Feral Child and Origins of Language

The next major case history of a feral child is found in Itard's writings on the Wild Boy of Aveyron. If we are to fully understand the basis upon which Itard wrote his observations on the Wild Man of Aveyron, we must first examine the traditions of eighteenth-century thought regarding the origin of language, and political theories concerning the state of nature. Itard's case history draws upon and re-interprets these traditions through its concrete experience of a child seen to exemplify human origins.

There is much in Monboddo's work which may remind us of the speculations of Condillac and Rousseau on the origins of language.[1] It is perhaps Condillac who is the more pertinent of the two theorists here. In order to create a model for the way in which language might have originated, Condillac creates a fiction, a myth, of two abandoned children.

Condillac's ideas on language begin with the argument that we can only conceive

of that which can be apprehended in the form of a sign. To elaborate this point, Condillac takes two examples of humans deprived of language. He first imagines a child deprived of language (Connor's bear-boy of 1694), and secondly narrates a story (later found in Buffon) of a young deaf man, who spontaneously acquired the ability to hear. As with the Cheselden experiment, this case offers a way of perceiving the world through the experience of astonishment, while expressing the desire to depict the origin of a faculty, or sense recreated in an individual. In other words, the functions of such a story are reproduced in the narrative of the feral child. Condillac presents the deaf man and the feral child existing in a world empty of ideas, where events cannot be turned into the permanence of memory or reflection, but remain evanescent and bound to the passing moment. The individual in such a circumstance would be unable to re-present things to itself through thoughts or signs, which are the de-sensed images of objects or states in the external world. Without signs, the individual would be unable to compare his or her own thoughts, and so would never develop the faculty of judgement. He or she would be lost in a perpetual present, in which identity could not exist, the human simply sharing the narrow, continually new, arbitrary world of the animals. Such an individual may have "reminiscences", but they would have no remembrance - for remembrance implies will, whereas reminiscence only requires the repetition of circumstances. Without the benefit of signs we would be unable to create a concept outside that of our own experience: Condillac cites the example of an American tribe who could only count to twenty, and so had no concept of the idea of "twenty-one".

This indirectly raises a major subject of my thesis. In later eighteenth-century linguistics we find a new understanding of words as signs which refer to, or can only be understood through, other signs:

> The second major shift in English linguistics in the years I am considering is the confinement of words to other words. At one time regarded as the signs of things themselves and later as the key to mental operations, words now become items in a self-contained, independent human invention. What the new linguist discovers by studying language is not the order or nature of things or the methods of thinking but the specific structure of a language and the status (and stature) of the society that has developed its linguistic habits in a particular manner (Cohen, 1977: 99).

If, in the eighteenth century, the idea of language as a self-sufficient system comes into being, then this may explain much of the function of the feral child in this period. The depiction of language as a system immediately creates a relation to the person who exists outside that system. Either the feral child enters a system of discourse, mediating itself through the artifice of words, or the self only comes into being in the medium of discourse. There is simply felt to be no way for the person to form identity when deprived of the coherency and order of language. That more recent theories of language have replaced the orderly and rational linguistic system of the eighteenth century with an idea of discourse predicated upon fracture, disjunction, and contradiction makes no material difference to this process - particularly when we consider just how compromised the authority of signs appears in the "savage girl" text, and indeed in most literary works. The question persists: if the feral child embodies a self that exists outside language, then how can that self be said to exist? Does the feral child simply exist as a symbol for the self without language, constituting an edge beyond the system of signs?

Condillac's answer is simple. There is no self, and no identity outside the system of signs. What exists there is only the animal awareness of a world of objects impinging upon the perceptions of the subject, without ever arriving at coherence. Central to Condillac's system is the idea that all human faculties derive from the ideas and impressions produced by sensation. In the works produced after the *Essai*, Condillac's

primary move is to reject Locke's conception of "reflection" as a metaphysical stain on the logical and materialist elegance of his psychological model. However, Condillac's answer begs another question: how then does this silent, storyless subject attain the status of a reflective self?

It is here that the fiction of the abandoned children plays its part. It is noteworthy that Condillac's aim was to make philosophy subject to empirical observation, and enable it to escape the mistaken language of metaphysics. Yet at the vital point in his elucidation of human understanding, his presentation of the origin of language, he introduces a fiction, almost a myth of human origins. Within the terms of empirical observation, Condillac's narrative of two children who are the only survivors of some natural catastrophe is a failure, a place of breakdown in his rationalist discourse. Yet it is also a point of renewal. The fiction performs the function of replenishment, of wonder.

It is central to Condillac's reading of the process of selfhood, that it requires the presence of an other in order to come into being. Again, this is central to the idea of the feral child, which involves a condition of absolute loneliness in order to reaffirm the necessity of others:

> So long as the abovementioned children lived asunder, the operations of their minds were confined to perception and consciousness which never cease to act while we are awake; to attention which must have taken place whenever any perception affected them in a particular manner; to reminiscence, which was when they recollected some circumstances that had struck them, before they had lost the connexions formed by those circumstances; and to a very limited exercise of the imagination (Condillac, 1756 : 171).[2]

This state of perception and consciousness changes when the two children come to live together. (Condillac fails to explain why exactly they should want to live together, which may be one reason why Rousseau felt that he had to provide his own explanation).

Through living in each other's company, the two develop the faculty of sympathy - a sympathy which is founded in need / "besoin" (1746, 2: 6). In Condillac's example, sympathy is as much created by the selfish desire for possession of an object, as by the need to convey that desire to another. The two children acquire the habit of reading each other's signs. They learn to use signs to express themselves to one another. The sounds they naturally made anyway, those "arbitrary signs", began to be reconstituted as agreed signals.

Then the couple themselves have a child. This infant, out of its own need, and possessing a pliant tongue denied to its parents, *invents a word*:

> Let us suppose this young couple to have had a child, who being pressed by wants which he could not without some difficulty make known, put every part of his body into motion. His tongue being extremely pliant, made an extraordinary motion, and pronounced a new expression. As those wants continued to press the child, this occasioned a repetition of the same efforts; again he moved his tongue in the same manner as at first, and articulated the same sound. The parents surprized, having at length guessed his meaning, gave him what he wanted, but tried as they gave it him, to repeat the same word. The difficulty they had to pronounce it, showed that they were not of themselves capable of inventing it (1756: 175).[3]

Here the text suggests a language of empirical observation ("the difficulty they had to pronounce it") and thereby attempts to elude its own status as fiction. This is more apparent in the original French which omits the qualifying "Let us suppose" with which the translation begins. The myth here does not resolve doubts, it multiplies them. The elaborate conceit of creating silent parents must be gone through in order to create a child born into a world without language, but in which its cries could be heard. Yet, in the end, it is simply the child's needs or wants ("besoins") which create in it the spontaneous invention of a word. It speaks to gain sympathy, which is itself a "besoin". This sudden and unprecedented institution of spoken signs really brings us no nearer to the

commencement of human language. Condillac senses this, and exaggerates the slowness and false starts required to institute language in this manner: the adults not being able to use sounds themselves discourage the infant, who is co-opted into a language of gestures. For this reason, language progresses with extreme slowness, as each generation builds up the stack of words. However, even then, Condillac imagines a second more effective origin for language, which begins again purely with proper names. The impact of the feral child story is rather to concentrate our minds upon the strangeness of such a figure, rather than to successfully incorporate it into a convincing model of the origin of language. Yet Condillac introduces into the discussion of the feral child the key concepts of need and sympathy. It is in the distinctions and connections between these two drives that much later writing on the feral child was to build.

In the *Traité des Animaux* (Paris: 1755), Condillac says more of the mutual needs which found language. He remarks that the fact of language assumes the fundamental sharing of common ideas. By its very nature, language depends upon that which is universal, rather than that which is unique. The moment of sympathy which may institute language therefore speaks to our commonality, and in doing so palliates our strangeness to each other.

The concept of sympathy is of particular importance for Adam Smith's theory of the origin of language. In the fourth edition of *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759), Smith attaches "A Dissertation on the Origin of Languages" (London: 1774). This dissertation builds upon Smith's image of the origin of human society found in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. Smith asserts that our senses lock us into a solipsistic immediacy. However, through the development of imagination, which exists through reference to our private sensual experience, we develop compassion, or fellow-feeling. It is in the moment

of sympathy that we become aware of others as others. The sympathy is not a reflection of the other's passion, but exists as an imaginative response to his or her situation. This primary form of social cohesion is of course modified in a number of ways. The final and most important such modification is that the self finally learns to perceive itself as it might perceive another. This moderates passion, since at the basis of the moment of sympathy is a resistance to excess of feeling. Too extravagant a sorrow defeats compassion, as does the spectacle of intense bodily pain, unless this is made appreciable by the external appearance of a bodily wound. Sympathy aids the social passions, those which are harmonious and modulated. The rough and irregular unsocial passions, such as hatred, are not so easily entered into. Yet at the basis of Smith's ideas is the notion of exchange between the self and the other:

> But though sympathy is very properly said to arise from an imaginary change of situations with the person principally concerned, yet this imaginary change is not supposed to happen to me in my own person and character, but in that of the person with whom I sympathize [...] I consider what I should suffer if I was really you, and I not only change circumstances with you, but I change persons and characters (Smith, 1774: 392).

In considering this identification of the self with the other as the basis of moral sentiments, Smith inevitably finds himself led into a consideration of the moment in which society begins. In his image of social origins, Smith juxtaposes Hobbes, with his idea of "right" and "wrong" as arbitary notions, with Cudworth, who sees reason as the source of morals. In a way, Smith evades such a rigid distinction in his own work by psychologising the moment of human union, a moment which repeats the abolition of the state of nature as solitary. This psychologised instant in which the self perceives the other establish an idea of the social.

Smith's idea of the origin of language disposes of Condillac's elaborate myth,

though it too introduces the image of two isolated "savages". This pair simply designate objects by words, which they mutually agree upon, a process which Smith terms "Autonomasia". These words at first designate individual objects, but are soon applied to similar objects. In this way "the proper names of individuals, would each of them insensibly become the common name of a multitude" (1774: 438). Smith side-steps the difficulty of the relation between the universal and the individual which had exercised Berkeley, Rousseau, and particularly Monboddo. Indeed, Smith's work, which was published in the year following the printing of the first volume of *Of the Origin and Progress of Language*, may best be understood as a refutation of Monboddo's ideas.

For this reason, perhaps, Smith is mainly concerned to show the naturalness and simplicity of language. It does not require a mysterious or supernatural origin, but resolves itself into the concrete and the particularised. Even the question of how such a concrete use of language (not unlike that with which Wittgenstein begins his *Philosophical Investigations*) could develop into a language in which abstraction might be possible is removed by the familiar solution of simply giving up the process to the series of minute changes made in language use over time. However, in considering this process, Smith raises the question as to how the abstract idea of the self ever emerged:

> The word *I*, for example, is a word of a very particular species. Whatever speaks may denote itself by this personal pronoun. The word *I*, therefore is a general word, capable of being predicated, as the logicians say, of an infinite variety of objects. It differs, however, from all other general words in this respect; that the objects of which it may be predicated, do not form any particular species of objects, distinguished from all others. The word *I*, does not, like the word *man*, denote a particular class of objects, separated from all others by peculiar qualities of their own. It is far from being the name of a species, but, on the contrary, whenever it is made use of, it always denotes a precise individual, the particular person who then speaks. It may be said to be, at once, both what the logicians call, a singular, and what they call, a common term; and to join in its signification the seemingly opposite qualities of the most precise

> individuality, and the most extensive generalization. This word, therefore, expressing so very abstract and metaphysical an idea, would not easily or readily occur to the first formers of language. What are called the personal pronouns, it may be observed, are among the last words of which children learn to make use. A child, speaking of itself, says, *Billy walks, Billy sits*, instead of *I walk, I sit*. As in the beginnings of language, therefore, mankind seems to have evaded the invention of at least the more abstract prepositions, and to have expressed the same relations which these *now* stand for, by varying the terminations of the co-relative term, so they likewise would naturally attempt to evade the necessity of inventing those more abstract pronouns by varying the termination of the verb, according as the event which it expressed was intended to be affirmed of the first, second, or third person (Smith, 1774: 465-6).

"Whatever speaks may denote itself by this personal pronoun." The statment raises a number of questions as to how we should place the feral child in Smith's version of linguistic subjectivity. This is despite the fact that later he notes that there are those who speak without the use of the personal pronoun, specifically children, by implication "savages", and the inhabitants of antiquity. The uniting of early language use phylogenetically and ontogenetically invites us to assume a recapitulatory linguistics.

The ability to say "I", to denote the self as both unique and part of a commonality, is a mode of definition that the feral child lacks. Yet this defining "I" is certainly not the delimiting definition of being human: as Smith stresses, it is "man" which constitutes the universal term for a human being. The word "I" expresses our commonality and also our strangeness, our uniqueness. However, the feral child seems to express a condition of absolute strangeness. Does this extremity in the feral child result from its existing purely in the essentially human, yet also that which is seen only as other? Or is it precisely, as Smith contradictorally affirms in the main body of *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, that the feral child exists without imagination, unable to feel compassion for others, and therefore existing in the moments before the foundation of human society? Yet this lack of selfhood, this presentation of the person as object, and as an object to itself, is actually

a mark of childhood as such. One may imagine that the process that Smith alludes to is one in which the world feels to the child as though it were solely composed of objective others, through an overflowing of its own subjectivity. Yet we may also feel that the child, like the feral child, is to be imagined as not without a soul (this being the constitutive fact of being a "man" at all), but without a self, that it inhabits a world devoid of self-consciousness, in which it itself is an object among objects.

Smith's ideas complicate our image of the feral child in ways which cannot easily be resolved. However, they direct our attention to what is at stake in the representation of the feral child. What matters here is how we choose to define the "human", and that this definition is felt inevitably to bring in the relation of the self to the other.

Smith's image of human society as instituted in a moment of sympathy leads us to a consideration of the work of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Rousseau's work on politics makes direct use of the feral child, but firstly I would like to say something of Rousseau's ideas of the origins of language. The *Essai sur l'origine des Langues* (Paris: 1817) is chiefly famous now for provoking Derrida's *Of Grammatology* (1967) (Baltimore: 1974). Without denying the importance of Derrida's criticisms of Rousseau, or their pertinence here, I shall concentrate on elucidating the basis of Rousseau's arguments concerning origins.

Rousseau asserts that language is instituted by the recognition of others as similar to the self. From this moment of identification stems the desire to communicate with others:

> As soon as one man was recognised by another as a sentient, thinking Being, similar to himself, the desire or the need to communicate to him his sentiments and thoughts made him seek the means to do so. Such means can only be drawn from the senses, the only instruments by which one man can act upon another. Hence the institution of sensible signs to express

thought (Rousseau, 1986: 240).[4]

Communication is ordered in an hierarchy, which descends from gesture, through direct speech, to writing. This rejection of the spoken is despite the fact that Rousseau acknowledges that the successive impression of words outstrips in force and passion the merely momentary force of a gesture.

It is the possession of a conventional language ("la langue de convention" (1986: 244; 1817: 504)) which separates humanity from the animals. Human speech is instituted firstly by the desire for communication, but increasingly, as the text progresses, Rousseau places the origin of language in human needs ("besoins"). This plainly connects Rousseau's work to the portrayal of need presented in the anonymous text that describes Memmie Le Blanc. For Rousseau, this need is a passion, "des besoins moraux, des passions" (1817: 501). It is our passions which unite us: the origin of the human occurs in feeling. It is in our desire for exchange and communication with others that language finds its origin. Although our bodily needs are best answered by ourselves, in self-sufficiency, our emotion requires an interlocutor. The need for an addressee necessitates language:

> Fruits do not shrink from our grasp, one can eat it without speaking; one stalks in silence the prey one means to devour; but in order to move a young heart, to repulse an unjust aggressor, nature dictates accents, cries, plaints: here are the oldest invented words, and here is why the first languages were songlike and passionate before they were simple and methodical (Rousseau, 1986: 245-6).[5]

Later Rousseau affirms that it is our imaginative identification with others that therefore acts as the origin of social attachments. In the moment of pity we are transported outside of ourselves as we identify with the other: "it is not in ourselves but in him we suffer" (Rousseau, 1986: 261) / "ce n'est pas dans nous, c'est dans lui que nous souffrons" (1817:

517). This finding of the self in the suffering of the other may suggest to us a sentimentalisation of sympathy, rather than actual compassion. However, Rousseau appears certain that it is through imaginative reflection that we exchange places with the other. Communication and compassion are inter-dependent.

Nevertheless, Rousseau's position regarding the origin of the social is more confused and contradictory than this might suggest. He oscillates between arguing that it is the harshness of necessity that creates the need for the social, and the belief that moral passion brings people together. It may be that the individual relationship is to be contrasted with wider social union. However, it would appear that Rousseau sees the social commencing in such apparently private and personal responses.

Behind this contradiction in the *Essai* lies an ethical and personal crux in Rousseau's discourse. The desire to communicate and to have personal relationships is brought up against a longing for a paradisal solitude. I shall return to this in more detail later, when I examine the place of the feral child in Rousseau's *Discours sur l'origine de l''Inégalité*.

In the *Essai*, Rousseau tries to resolve this contradiction by creating a myth of the origin. He presents an idyll of youthfulness:

> Beneath old oaks, conquerors of years, spirited young people gradually forgot their ferociousness; little by little they tamed one another; in striving to make themselves understood, they learned to make themselves intelligible. Here the first festivals took place; feet skipped with joy, an eager gesture no longer proved adequate, the voice accompanied it with passionate accents, pleasure and desire merged into one and made themselves felt together. Here, finally, was the true cradle of peoples, and from the pure crystals of the fountains sprang the first fires of love (Rousseau, 1986: 271).[6]

Previously, Rousseau envisaged the origin of language as the outcome of a struggle between self-sufficiency and communication, or as the result of compassion. Here he

introduces a third origin, one that occurs rhapsodically in an ideal image of young sexual love. The origin is linked to youthfulness. The children of silent and loveless families come together where water is gathered. Their need to communicate the pleasures of their innocent loves draws out from them (through passion) the first use of language. Language originates when the child leaves its family and enters into relationship with an individual outside the family. Precisely where incestuous union ends, language properly begins. Language is the means of escape from the tedious world of the family, which is empty, moribund, and lifeless. It signals an escape from the father. In this version, language begins in pleasure.

What all these arguments have in common is a concern with re-playing the moment of linguistic inception. This quest for an originating moment is also present in eighteenth century theories of the state of nature. Writers look back to the initiating instant at which society comes into being. This similarity partly derives from the fact that the beginning of language use is often tied to the origin of the social domain. It is this concern with inceptions and beginnings, and the shared language that describes them, that is the most distinctive element in Itard's study of the Wild Boy of Aveyron.

Part Two - The State of Nature: Ideas of the Origin of the Political

Politically speaking, the feral child occupies the state of nature, that place and time which precedes the foundation of social and political life. Combined with the psychological explanation of language found in Condillac and Rousseau, this political tradition creates the environment in which Itard's young "savage" was to be understood.

The state of nature is best apprehended as an historicist metaphor of origins, a means of talking about the natural condition of humanity, and an exemplum of the idea of freedom. It posits within the otherwise deterministic realm of the social the idea of an essential and individualistic liberty, that is our origin, and the base of our selves. The feral child combining images of the "savage" and childhood, can exemplify that original freedom.

That the origin may be a fiction, an imagination of humanity distinct from the complications of contingency, was an idea present in the first philosophical discussions of the state of nature. In *Leviathan* (1651) (Oxford: 1946), Thomas Hobbes imagines the state of nature not as an historical reality, but as a fiction. This fiction does not embody an actual state of pre-civil society, but rather illustrates the first active principle of human nature. The principle is passion, and can be witnessed in childhood, this being the state closest to the human essence found in the state of nature.

Hobbes depicts the state of nature as a state of war, a life with:

> no knowledge of the face of the earth; no account of time; no arts; no letters; no society; and which is worst of all, continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short. (Hobbes, 1946: 82)

Hobbes's depiction of humanity in its natural condition is in fact an elucidation of the human condition as it might appear in its essential state. The law and justice which might liberate humanity from this state of war are not absolutes, but are contingent upon human covenants and relationships. There is no "natural law" in the state of nature, for the initiation of law is in the covenant that draws humanity out of its anarchic, violent, and solitary natural condition. The state of nature here is really an image of nature as such, seen as a process of perpetual struggle.

The state of nature expresses an idea of the pre-political condition of humanity. This pre-political state is imagined as an origin of civil society, although an origin that by its nature is not just the first term of a series, but also stands outside the series, prior to the idea of development as such. The state of nature is the "origin" out of which human tradition emerges. It is equivalent to the condition of potentiality. In the origin there is only the possibility of history, for history, and hence narrative, is yet to begin.

Implicit in any discussion of the state of nature is the presence of its opposite, even its antagonist, that is the *polis* or *civitas*. The city is that which follows the state of nature in point of time, that which comes after the origin. It is the political, legal, and social community founded in the idea of a relationship and a common aim shared through the common human possession of reason. The city is where history begins, where narrative commences with its rationale of cause and effect, where humans establish a continuing tradition. The city is founded not just in the fact of living in proximity to others, but rather in the recognition that this fact might include the idea of organisation. The citizens share a common law that codifies and preserves social relationships. In the state of nature there is no law because no common relationship can occur in this absolute state. Relationships require the presence and the protection of mutually binding conventions and

rules. In the state of nature there are no rules, only the conflict of individualities that do not recognise the fact of others as contingencies on their own nature.

However, the state of nature is not merely the origin, it is also a pre-political condition contained within the present, an abyss into which civil society may easily fall. The state of nature in this case refers to our residual original humanity, to the fact that once stripped of all civil rights, duties, and relationships, we are reduced to the essentially human, Lear's "unaccommodated man." For the leaders and ideologists of the French Revolution, this perpetual state of nature contained within the fabric of human society had two vital meanings. *Philosophes*, physiocrats, idéologues, and De Tocqueville's *hommes des lettres*, all in different ways envisaged a return to a state of nature as a means of beginning the narrative of human society over again, returning to the mythical essence of the origin. The other concern was to bring the poor into the political domain, to recognise as the vital actors in the political drama those whom poverty had condemned to a life concerned purely with the activity of remaining alive. In each case there is a relation to a concept of the state of nature. Firstly, the idéologues invoke a pre-political topos out of which civil society forms. Secondly, they respond to the experience of the human condition as being in its essence one of misery and the attempted satisfaction of the animal needs of food, drink, and shelter. The body and its needs become the basis of political life.

The meaning of the state of nature can be explained further by a consideration of its relation to the idea of human progress. Turgot establishes the nature of this relationship in his *A Philosophical Review of the Successive Advances of the Human Mind* (written, 1750) and his *Discourses On Universal History* (written, 1750).[7] Turgot argues that nature is enclosed in a series of perpetual revolutions. The state of nature means being monotonously and forever the same, since nature is forever new, being unable either

to develop or to decay. Each generation of animals repeats precisely the life-cycle of all preceding generations. The life of things returns forever to its starting-point, and nature exists without change in a endlessly repeated pattern of birth, growth, and death. This may bring to mind the Huron's writing on the state of nature in Voltaire's *L'Ingenu* (1767) (Voltaire, 1964: 148). Turgot distinguishes human history from this revolving wheel of life and death. History advances forward in a continuous progress, in which each human event occurs in a teleological relation of cause and effect. In terms that recall Condillac, Turgot describes how the faculty of language preserves the individual event for others, and so inscribes the individual experience as a link in the chain of human succession. Unlike the state of nature, the individual life does not come and go as part of a process of which it has no control. Rather, something of the individual life is rescued from this flux of birth and death, and rescued for the purpose of adding to the sum of human knowledge and tradition (Turgot, 1973: 41)

However, Turgot imagines this upward progress of human experience as being accomplished within the confines of a history which also bears the stamp of flux and instability. Within history, "revolutions" come and go, raising up and bringing down commonwealths and empires. These "revolutions" have something of the essence of things in nature; they are forces like tempests or storms at sea. "Revolution" manifests the constant flux and instability of all things. Yet this natural turmoil present in human affairs is also the means of the progress by which humanity marks itself off from the state of nature. Out of a natural and irresistible force of nature emerges a perfected humanity (Turgot, 1973: 44). For Turgot, these chaotic periods of change are a good in themselves. Upheaval and violence is to be welcomed as a necessary means of introducing change into a society, which otherwise would become moribund and stultified.

In common with much Enlightenment thought, Turgot's description of human society depends upon the concept of history as a record of progress. In this model, the preservation of society depends upon the notion of continuity, that the generations do not merely follow each other, but rather each generation inherits the accrued knowledge and experience of its predecessors.

However, a contrasting idea exists in the ideology of the Revolution, which argues that the generations are bound together not as heirs and inheritors but as combatants. An older concept of history than Turgot's is that human society itself manifests the flux that Turgot limits to "nature". In this older Christian model society contains within itself its own principle of instability, in so far as new people are being born into it continuously. Human society is under the obligation of absorbing the influx of people, in such a way as both to modify itself to accommodate them, and also to preserve itself from too radical a change. Education and history become in part a matter of the regulation of the relationship between the generations. Against Turgot's model of human progress initiated by passion and secured by the sign, there is the idea of human history as a continuous process of conflict and reconciliation between the young and old.

Alexis De Tocqueville perceived that the fundamental Revolutionary desire was the wish to return to a condition of primitive simplicity, to live in a modern society ordered as the state of nature:

> Thus, though their ways diverged in the course of their researches, their starting point was the same in all cases; and this was the belief that what was wanted was to replace the complex of traditional customs governing the social order of the day by simple, elementary rules deriving from the exercise of the human reason and natural law (De Tocqueville, 1955: 139).

De Tocqueville saw that embroiled in this wish to live simply and "naturally" was a hatred of the past as being guiltily responsible for the presence of injustice and misery.

Motivated partly by a hatred of injustice as such, the ideologists of the Revolution created, or found in the works of the *philosophes*, an image of a perfect and ideal society "in which all was simple, uniform, coherent, equitable, and rational in the full sense of the term" (De Tocqueville, 1955: 146). In the works of the *philosophes* there could be discovered the representation of an ideal state, where human life would be organised along systematic lines.

That Burke saw the dangers which could result from such a social experiment is due both to his uncanny prescience and an accidental product of his ideology of tradition. Through his adherence to the principle of precedent and the authority of tradition, Burke placed the idea of "rights" in the empirical and practical domain of legal relationships. In Burke, the family metaphor acquires connotations of "family love" and "continuity". The family acts as the embodiment of a tradition preserved in the nature of irrational and affectionate bonds. On the other side, Condorcet saw political rights as belonging to an objective and immutable framework necessitated by the permanence of "human nature". Condorcet argued that to establish the perfect society it was only necessary to ascertain the underlying and unchanging laws of human nature, and then to act in accord with that nature in the political sphere. In other words, Condorcet imagined that it would be possible to bring into the contingent and relative domain of human relationships the absolute laws of human nature. The complex and changeful nature of human society would therefore be made to correspond to the perfect uniformity of nature's laws. Instead of the chaos of human relations there would be placid changelessness. This placidity was already expressed in the ideas of the word "revolution", which meant both the condition of flux and also the permanent existence at the origin.

In the case of Rousseau, we can see a contrast between the confusions of *The*

Confessions and the order of *The Social Contract*. In "The General Society of the Human Race", an omitted chapter of the *Social Contract*, Rousseau describes what he calls the "wretchedness" of human beings in a society created by mutual needs, and not by the "natural" laws of the Legislator:

> From this new order of things there arises a multitude of relationships without measure, without rule, and without consistency. Men are continually deforming and changing them, and for every one who tries to fix them there are a hundred working to destroy them. And as the relative existence of a man in the state of nature depends on a thousand other relationships which are continually changing, he can never be sure he is going to stay the same for two moments of his life (Rousseau, 1973: 169-170).

In other words, the kind of society that arises naturally from the state of nature induces a psychological despair in the individual within it, since that society is a piecemeal affair not called into being by the general will. This despair is the product of the numerous relationships into which the individual must enter, and the fact that these relationships occur "without rule".[8]

Similarly, in *Émile* (1762) (Harmondsworth: 1991), the child's education takes place in a solitude that will represent as far as possible the state of nature. The relationship with his teacher removes Emile from the absolute pre-political sphere that complete isolation would suggest. However, the book describes the creation of an artificial domain that is distinct from, but nonetheless adjoined to, the ordinary world of society. For our present purposes, the main point about this extra-social world is that it saves the child from the multiplicity and confusion of social relationships, but also places the child in an absolute relationship to his teacher. The teacher-pupil relationship becomes a static, clear and dominating exemplum for all social relations. The teacher is master, father, and educator. In this artificial locale, the teacher can lead his pupil from the state

of nature to social life in an orderly and stage-managed recapitulation of the philosopher's idealised representation of human progress.[9]

The work of Turgot exemplifies this desire to end the formlessness of existing social life in the fabrication of a new society. Turgot wishes for a return to the "first principle" of human existence, a principle that finds its validation in being drawn from "nature":

> One must start from nature as it is, and from that infinite variety of effects which so many causes, counterbalanced one by the other, have combined to produce [...] Ideas emerge and are assembled in our minds almost without our knowing it; we are beset by the images of objects right from the cradle [...] This chaotic blend of ideas and expressions grows and becomes more complex all the time; and when man starts to seek for truth he finds himself in the midst of the labyrinth which he has entered blindfold (Turgot, 1973: 45).

A Lockean philosophy of associationism is implicit in Turgot's argument. What Turgot desires is that the mind should be able to free itself from the processes of its own creation, and, through a stripping away of excrescent error, become disinterested, a mind shaped only according to the dictates of "nature". In this way the mind frees itself from the errors of society, and in a purged state is enabled to re-construct society along the lines of universal laws of reason and "human nature". A complementary desire to return to one's own state of nature is involved in Turgot's speculations. It is as if the mind might return to the Lockean blank page, though only to find there, in its infant mind, the natural ideas that would re-shape one's formless and chaotic life in society. There is something of this in Condillac's notion of metaphysical error piling up in language, which can be seen as longing for a new beginning, a return to the primordial and silence of the state of nature in order to learn to speak rightly and truthfully.

Burke asserts that the Revolution's ideology of a radical break with the present

and return to the imagined conditions and rights of the past ("the state of nature") contains within itself a principle of fundamental social instability. If each new generation refuses to accept the bond or law of its predecessors, then the law ceases to operate as a means of preserving the relationship between the young and the old, and rather acts as if society were bound in the recurring cycles of history, with each generation separated from the past and future, and located only in the continuing flux of the present. In short, there are two models of historical development present in the philosophies and ideologies of the Revolution. The Revolution in its commitment to the idea of human progress, the *perfectibilité* of humankind, drew upon an image of human history as bound ever upwards by the eradication of error, the discernment of truth, and the creation of a society constructed on the principles of eternal human laws.

However, the ideologists and *philosophes* saw human progress as only being achieved by a radical break with the traditions of the past, a "revolution" to a state of nature from which society could begin again. In this case the model of history as generational struggle would be absolute. In claiming the rights of the adult, the people had necessarily to reject the whole inheritance of their political leaders. In the course of the Revolution, the *philosophes* and leaders realised that the "revolution" could therefore of itself become perpetual. As Hannah Arendt argues in *On Revolution* (1964) (Harmondsworth: 1990), in returning to the origin and disregarding the authority of tradition, the Revolutionaries found themselves immersed in the condition of "origins", bound in a "state of nature" where no law could assume the necessary authority to ensure the passage out from the pre-political and back into the renovated course of history.

In order to understand the complexities of the Revolutionary idea of the origin, we should consider briefly a contrary idea of history and political continuity. The Roman

view of history, a view which substantially holds much of Burke's criticism of the Revolution, is that of a teleological series of interconnected events. This series of events binds the present to the origin, and to an indefinite future. Both Hannah Arendt and Lidia Mazzolani (London: 1970) have seen this Roman doctrine of piety exemplified in Virgil's *Aeneid*. Arendt asserts that the essential fact of Aeneas' foundation is that it does not of itself form an "origin". It is not so much the foundation of the city of Rome, as the re-establishment of Troy. Aeneas carries his household gods from Troy to Italy in what is an act of "pietas": that is, his action enshrines the Roman religious view in which the individual is bound in the succession of his or her family and the *polis* as such. Aeneas cannot start the life of his political community from the condition of an origin, he must instead pledge himself to the continuity of succession.

The origin of Rome provided an even more telling example for those interested in the state of nature, through the myth of Romulus and Remus. Here, political origins are literally traced back to a story of abandoned children brought up by animals. I have already written about some of the meanings of this story for images of political foundation. However, it is worth reiterating here that such a story places the origin of the political realm in an act of transgression. The origin of the state focuses in a moment in which the difference between the human and the animal, the political and the natural, is temporarily erased. The origin of the political sphere therefore occurs just in that moment when the basis of the political vanishes. The polis begins at the point furthest from its own nature.

Yet in this desire to return to the "origin" in order to renovate society there persists the sense that it is the "origin" itself that is truly desirable. The "origin" returns humanity to a state of immanence. There everything exists as a multitude of possibilities.

However, this "origin", this human state of nature, is already encoded with a fundamental and unchanging pattern of human nature and reason. This "nature" was the law of both the individual and the human species. Both the individual man or woman and the human race itself must grow according to the same unvarying law.

This argument led to a recapitulatory model, that described human history and the development of the individual in terms of each other. This recapitulatory model might be seen as the inevitable consequence of imagining the origins of human society in psychological terms. Much as the individual's development from childhood to adulthood was beginning to be seen as best understood as following psychological laws of growth and understanding, the human race's development from "savagery" (the state of nature) to political society was consequently seen as repeating these same "universal" laws.

The revolutionaries' ideas of the state of nature and progress require a philosophy of history, since their discourse depends upon the notion that there are laws that order events. What is unusual about this discourse is that the idea of "law" is no longer seen as establishing or stabilising human relations, but rather as alluding to a fundamental principle of growth (Hannah Arendt,1973: 464). In this way, the laws of human nature are the underlying forces that emerge in the development of a person or institution, that "nature" itself being realised in the course of its history. Therefore the psychological interest in the child's "becoming" manifests the same series of ideas as that which imagined society progressing through a series of "revolutions". There can be divined here a desire for the "origin" as immanence, but also a hardening of interest in the idea of "development", for it is assumed that the reality of a thing occurs in its development. In the history of the individual, as in the progress of humanity, the universality and "truth" of its "nature" are played out in the field of time.

The primary model for human development became a recapitulatory narrative, in which the individual life from infancy to adulthood repeated the history of the race from "savagery" to the present. The terms of this development echo the metaphors of revolution as family struggles. Furthermore, they carried suggestions, as in Condorcet and Godwin, of an indefinite and further stage of human progress, in which finally the limitations of mortality itself might be transcended.

For the purposes of this thesis the most vital consequence of the recapitulatory model of human growth was that it enmeshed "the child of nature" in the political and philosophical discussion of the state of nature. "The child of nature" belonged to the condition of the "origin" in being both child or adolescent and "savage". The recapitulatory psychology and history that Monboddo had employed now appears as decisive in the representation of the feral child. Recapitulation places the feral child within a new model of history, one in which the historical process itself acts as the guarantee of meaning for human life. Human history becomes a self-validating process in which the feral child exists as a visible embodiment of the first term in that process.

The *philosophes* had imagined an "origin" to which society could return itself. This "origin" was the pre-political and pre-linguistic state of nature, a state represented by the image of the "savage" and "the child of nature". "The child of nature" expressed the sense that human life was renewed by a perpetual repetition of its origin, that in the static life of society there remained the possibility of crisis. "The child of nature"repeats the origin of humanity in the context of the social present. This offers the possibility of representing the nature of that repetition as a revolutionary moment, which contains the possibility of redemption from the teleological course of history itself.

Part Three - The Wretched of the Earth: Inverting the State of Nature

The presence of "the child of nature" in political theory demonstrates how central the division between nature and culture had become. By manifesting humanity's primordial state, the child of nature could act as a complex sign of what it was to be essentially human. In fact, the identification of a specific human essence with a fictional type of "savage" was a rather convenient means of placing that essence in the realm of the utopian and fictional. It was clear that writers were dealing with "man as he is not", and therefore also indicating something of how they hoped man might yet be. The revolutionary nature of the origin was therefore that it created a figure which could exist as an ideal, precisely because it was lost in a pre-history that could only be fictionally recovered. The "child of nature" therefore could exemplify certain absolute properties of the origin in a way which fitted a myth of political renewal founded upon certain absolute principles. From this we can see how appealing and how potentially disturbing the appearance of an actual "child of nature" in post-Revolutionary Paris might be.

It is not surprising that the most effective critic of these ideas is Edmund Burke. However, it is precisely in rewriting the image of the child of nature that Burke's criticism was most perceptive. Tom Furniss's argument that Burke's reactionary politics mirror the concerns of radicalism is suggestive in this context (Cambridge: 1993). In the early text *A Vindication of Natural Society* (London: 1756), which parodies the ideas of Bolingbroke, Burke displayed his antipathy to political systems that derive dogmatically from absolute principles.[10] Moreover, the text notes the connection between a belief in the natural man and a politics based on "rational truths" derived directly from the

contemplation of Nature. Although the parody clearly reveals Burke's dislike for Bolingbroke's style and ideas, the effect of reading the text is oddly dualistic. While the reader remains constantly aware of an underlying contempt, the parody's arguments are nonetheless convincing at times. This combination of the ludicrous and the convincing suggests something of Burke's own imaginative relation to the idea of a "child of nature". Burke is both drawn to, and repelled by, the arguments which he professes to despise.

In *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (London: 1790), Burke creates a model of politics based upon deference, tradition, authority, and generational continuity. He places the coherence of a nation by fitting political life to the same processes of flux that characterise nature. This may suggest that he imports Turgot's image of a continually changing state of nature into an image of a social life founded upon order. In matching political life to the processes of nature, Burke transforms their character by emphasising the human capacity for continuity through change. The *philosophes* had imagined the process of generational change as one governed by struggle and disorder: Burke presents that such disorder is ended through a system of inheritance and exchange. The capacity for law and for affection humanise nature, just as nature orders human affairs. The generational model makes civilised life commensurable with the natural. The tendency of radical thought was to praise nature by creating an absolute point of distinction between the state of nature and civilised life. Humanity could look to the pre-political as a place of renewal, where the complex and modern might retrieve simplicity, recreating social life anew along the lines of rational principles. Burke does more than reverse this. He takes the imagery of the *philosophes* and recreates it by making the civilised in fact closest to the processes of nature. The most civilised life is fundamentally closer to the state of nature than the "child of nature" could ever be.

It is in *An Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs* (London: 1791) that Burke most successfully remakes the radical interest in "the child of nature" as a conservative political metaphor. This text portrays the revolution as monstrous, a revolt against nature, precisely because it appeals to the universal, a category which for Burke does not exist in political terms. Similarly, "moral nature" is revolted against by the French system which unnaturally returns humanity to the condition of nature. This is because it is in artifice that human nature is fulfilled. In this way, Burke returns to the ideas present in the transformation of the "wild man". Burke takes on the radical habit of appealing to an origin, by placing his argument in the historically located political origin of 1688. He also eloquently describes the origins of social life:

> Dark and inscrutable are the ways by which we come into the world. The instincts which give rise to this mysterious process of nature are not of our making. But out of physical causes, unknown to us, perhaps unknowable, arise moral duties, which, as we are able perfectly to comprehend, we are bound indispensably to perform. Children are not consenting to their relation, but their relation, without their actual consent, binds them to its duties; or rather, it implies their consent, because the presumed consent of a rational creature is in union with the predisposed order of things [...] If the social ties and ligaments, spun out of those relations which are the elements of the commonwealth, in most cases begin, and always continue independently of our will, so does that relation called our country, which comprehends [...] "all the charities of all," bind us to it without any stipulation on our part ... Our country is not a thing of mere physical locality. It consists, in a great measure, in the antient order into which we are born ... The place that determines our duty is a social, civil relation (Burke, 1791: 122).

The human being is shown here to be naturally attuned to the demands of the human artifice into which he or she is born. Our human nature is shown to be both unfathomable, and yet also visibly contained within the nexus of social and family relations.

In such circumstances to return to a "state of nature" dissolves those defining social duties and ties. Authority tumbles; all social relationships appear as coercion. This

is the product of "reasoning without prejudice" (1791: 128). Against this image of anarchy, Burke places another ideal, that of the aristocrat:

> A true natural aristocracy is not a separate interest in the state, or separable from it. It is an essential integrant part of any large people rightly constituted. It is formed out of a class of legitimate presumptions, which, taken as generalities, must be admitted for actual truths. To be bred in a place of estimation; To see nothing low and sordid from one's infancy; To be taught to respect one's self; To be habituated to the censorial inspection of the public eye; To look early to public opinion; [...] To have leisure to read, to reflect, to converse [...] These are the circumstances of men, who form what I should call a *natural* aristocracy, without which there is no nation.
> The state of civil society, which necessarily generates this aristocracy, is a state of nature; and much more truly so than a savage and incoherent mode of life; for man is by nature reasonable, and he is never perfectly in his natural state, but when he is placed where reason may best be cultivated, and most predominates. Art is man's nature. We are as much, at least, in a state of nature in formed manhood, as in immature and helpless infancy. To give no more importance in the social order, to such descriptions of men as I have stated, than that of so many units, is an horrible usurpation. Men so qualified form in nature, as she operates in the common modifications of society, the leading, guiding, and governing part. It is the soul to the body, without which the man does not exist (Burke, 1791: 128-131).

A sleight of hand in the rhetoric which terms such men a "natural" aristocracy may make one feel that Burke should have argued that all individuals might enjoy such aristocratic privileges. However, Burke transforms the radical images that he would have found in Rousseau and in Paine's criticisms of his earlier work, investing the human artifice with the imagery of the state of nature, proclaiming that it is in artifice that our natures are realised. The orderly life of the aristocrat is more natural than the meandering, forgetful existence of the "savage".

In presenting the aristocrat as the true "child of nature", Burke adds a further level of meaning to that connection between the "child of nature" and the aristocrat that we have already noticed in the Peter pamphlets. Moreover, his depiction of humanity without

artifice as being like a body without a soul is resonant when considering the uses of the feral child in political theory. Burke dismantles the radical representation of the state of nature. He shows that without culture humanity limits itself to the body, a body deprived of the immortality found in the soul, the political sphere, and the continuity created by inheritance.

It is the spectre of just such a body which haunts Itard's texts on the Wild Boy of Aveyron. The feral child embodies the revolutionary image of the state of nature. As such, the feral child reveals the limitations of such a condition, as well as enacting the passage out of the state of nature formulated in linguistic and political theory.

Part Four - Radical Innocence: Itard and The Wild Boy Of Aveyron

In France, in 1798, a child in rags was sighted in the woods near Aveyron. The boy, who was apparently living rough, evaded capture and was not seen again until 1800, when he sought shelter in a house in the Canton of St. Sernin. The boy was moved to the hospital at St. Afrique, and then went to Rhodez, where he remained for several months, before being sent through the intervention of a priest to Paris for medical inspection. From the first report of the feral child's capture, the post-revolutionary government displayed an official and paternal interest in the fate of the boy. He arrived in Paris on 18 Thermidor, and became an object of huge interest to those Parisians who had remained in the city during the August heat. The French Revolution had placed the "rights of man" in the idea of an abstract and universal human nature, and the feral child exemplified this essentiality, being both an embodiment of human misery and also of original "savagery". He was exhibited to the curious and fashionable, eager to see what might prove to be a native noble savage, a representative of a vanished Eden, perhaps even the symbol of political renovation. What they found instead was a dumb, slovenly, incurious, and unresponding boy. The authorities passed the child to Phillipe Pinel, France's most prestigious physician, a reformer of the asylums and a teacher of the deaf. After systematic tests, Pinel announced that the boy was not a noble savage at all, but in fact was a congenital idiot.

At this point the boy's history might well have ended with his permanent incarceration in an asylum. However, Jean-Marc Gaspard Itard, a young surgeon, suggested that perhaps Pinel's diagnosis was unsound and that something might yet be

done for the boy. Itard requested that the authorities should entrust him with care of the child at the Institute des Sourds-Muets (Institute for Deaf-Mutes) in the Rue Saint-Jacques. The government duly handed the boy onto Itard, who began at once to systematically educate the young savage - an education that was to lead a year later to the publication of his case history, *De l'Education d'un Homme Sauvage* (Paris: 1801), one of the masterpieces of scientific literature.[11]

Itard was twenty-six years old when he took on the education of the "young savage". He was still researching his doctoral thesis, making a living in private practice, and working in the evenings at the Institute des Sourds-Muets, where he had just been appointed as a consultant. Itard studied medicine under Larrey, and had worked briefly as a surgeon at Val de Grâce. At this time French medicine was dominated by the influence of two men: Corvisart, whose approach was clinical, and Pinel, who was seen as the inheritor of Condillac. Itard was strongly under the influence of Pinel, and his dispute with Pinel's diagnosis is in fact a radical critique of an old master's reluctance to follow his ideas to their logical conclusion. In one sense, the dispute was one over the nature of French medicine's inheritance from Condillac's psychologism. The dispute was also an opportunity for a young and ambitious intellectual to make a name for himself at the expense of the medical reputation of an older generation.

Condillac's influence on Itard is symptomatic of the enormous respect his ideas were granted in revolutionary France: "During the Revolution and the Empire his philosophy continued to be taught as the authoritative doctrine in the schools" (Hine, 1979: 2). Complete editions of Condillac's works were published in 1777, 1798, 1803, and 1807. The French first edition of Itard's case history begins with an epigraph from Condillac, drawn from the *Essai sur l'origine des connaissances humaines* (1746).

Indirectly, Itard's work might be considered as related to the work of the "*Idéologues*", with its rejection of the metaphysical, and its understanding of the human mind as formed through the Lockean (and Condillacian) impression of ideas. This would place Itard's work in the political context of the left wing of the late 1790's and early 1800's, and therefore the kind of work likely to appeal to the authorities. Reaction against Condillac was mainly seen as part of the intellectual reaction against the ideology of the Revolution, then most connected to German philosophy.

Itard's indebtedness to Condillac might therefore also link him to the writings of Tracy. For instance, it is possible that in 1795, as part of his studies, Itard might have attended Tracy's lectures on ideology at the Institut National des Sciences et Arts. Tracy develops Condillac's ideas in ways which are suggestive in the context of Itard's writings on the wild boy. Tracy's *Projet D'Eléments D'Idéologie à L'Usage des Écoles Centrales de la République Françaises* (Paris: 1801) was published several months before Itard's first report. His idea that the formation of the human mind depends upon the interaction of "ideas" derived from sensation is remarkably close to the ideas behind Itard's methods in educating the boy. As the title of his work suggests, Tracy's book was intended as an educational tool.

When Itard first encountered the young savage, the child had been living rough in the forests around Aveyron for seven years, from his fifth year to around his twelfth. Here Itard describes the popular sense of disappointment and disgust following on the first

impressions of the boy:

> The most brilliant but unreasonable expectations were formed by the people of Paris respecting the *Savage of Aveyron*, before he arrived. Many curious people anticipated great pleasure in beholding what would be his astonishment at the sight of all the fine things in the capital. On the other hand, many persons eminent for their superior understanding, forgetting that our organs are less flexible, and imitation more difficult, in proportion as man is removed from society, and the period of his infancy, thought that the education of this individual would be the business of only a few months, and that they should very soon hear him make the most striking observations concerning his past manner of life. Instead of this, what did they see? - a disgusting, slovenly boy, affected with spasmodic, and frequently with convulsive motions, continually balancing himself like some of the animals in the menagerie, biting and scratching those who contradicted him, expressing no kind of affection for those who attended upon him; and, in short, indifferent to every body, and paying no regard to any thing (Itard, 1802: 16-17).[12]

Itard considered the boy to be at the lowest level of life, stuck in savagery, infancy, and animality, as though his wild, asocial life had prevented his natural development into adolescence and humanity. Itard's understanding of the boy operates on the level of an ambivalent denial of some of the primitivist assumptions in the ideas of the state of nature, as this applied to political and linguistic origins.

Itard is in unwitting agreement with Burke. There are no "rights of man", since "man" does not exist, except in so far as he is a citizen also. Itard affirms that human nature only comes into being through the institutions of society:

> Cast on this globe, without physical powers, and without innate ideas; unable by himself to obey the constitutional laws of his organization, which call him to the first rank in the system of being; MAN can only find in the bosom of society the eminent station that was destined for him in nature, and would be, without the aid of civilization, one of the most feeble and least intelligent of animals; - a truth which, although it has often been insisted upon, has not as yet been rigorously demonstrated (Itard, 1802: 3).[13]

The human in the state of nature is a pitiful animal, incapable without others of sustaining its own miserable life. A return to a state of nature therefore requires a rejection of

authority and community. Above all, the self returns to an inhuman isolation. Yet, as I shall go on to argue, in some measure Itard remains attracted to the radical individualism which prompts such a return. Itard believed that the young savage could not have developed normally simply because he existed outside society. It seems that in affirming this, Itard was at once refuting Rousseau's primitivism, and tacitly accepting the terms of his primitivist argument. In his *Discours sur l'Origine de l'Inegalite*, Rousseau had taken stories of the feral child as revelatory of man's original nature, describing that "state of nature" as one defined by isolation. As we have seen, for Rousseau, the process of civilisation begins as soon as the individual enters into relationship with another.

Itard follows Rousseau's use of a radical disjunction between nature and culture, simply privileging the civilised as opposed to the natural. Yet like Rousseau, Itard is betrayed into a longing for the condition of childhood, a desire for a moment of arrest that would allow a share in the feral child's absolute attentiveness. It is clear that while consciously antagonistic to Rousseau's primitivism, Itard imagines the wild boy's entry into society as being accomplished in Rousseau's terms:

> It is by the activity of the passions that our reason improves itself; we seek to know only because we desire to enjoy; and it is impossible to conceive a man who had neither desire nor fears giving himself the trouble of reasoning (Rousseau, 1984: 89).

Similarly, Itard hopes to use the boy's passions as a means of reclaiming him for civilisation. Itard's professed aim was to civilise the beast, to start the savage on his progress from timeless sensation to rational civilisation. He set out to do this by socialising the wild boy, "to attach him to social life" (Itard, 1802: 33), creating a relationship with the boy that would of necessity put him on the path to civilisation. The educational process was to consist of five strands. The first was, as I have just said, to

socialise him, by rendering society attractive and also "more analogous to the mode of existence that he was about to quit" (Itard, 1802: 33). Secondly, to stimulate the nervous system, heightening the child's perceptions as a preparation for the development of reflection. Thirdly, to increase his ideas by multiplying his wants: need being the initiatory force behind mental operations. Fourthly, to teach him language through the use of imitation. Fifthly, by connecting mental ideas to physical wants, to apply those ideas to objects of instruction.[14]

Itard had derived from Rousseau and Condillac the notion that progress towards civilisation is accomplished with the education of the passions towards reason; our passions establish a need for the understanding. However, where Rousseau sees the savage as happier and more fulfilled than the rational adult, Itard suggests that humanity's fulfilment lies in reason and civilisation. The passions are merely a means of attaining this desirable end.

Inevitably this transition echoes the end of the state of nature. Itard attempts to describe the manner in which the social realm comes into being: it is fundamentally the same project as that evinced by those writing on the origin of language and of politics. Itard would have known of several different philosophical narratives delineating the inception of the social - including Locke's contract theory, the dynamics of mutual fear as presented by Montesquieu, and the strange mingling of fear and sympathy found in the writings of Rousseau. However, it is principally the ideas of Condillac that formulate the terms of Itard's representation.

The story of the boy's first entry into society can be seen in terms of a contract. The boy's voluntary return to human society implies a will to belong again to the realm of the social. Society also enters into a contract with the boy:

> In the midst of this general indifference, the administrators of the National Institute for the Deaf and Dumb, and its celebrated director, did not forget, that society, in drawing to herself this unfortunate youth, had contracted towards him indispensable obligations which she was bound to fulfil (Itard, 1802: 18).[15]

The young savage's arrival replays a narrative of social origins. The feral child presents the possibility of political change, by embodying the possibility of a return to an original condition prior to the political as it now exists. The child makes a radical incursion into the order of things. In so doing, he becomes absorbed within the political framework, becoming its responsibility.

This primarily political relationship is shown to have ethical meanings which are present also in the relationship between the boy and his teacher. Moments of regret at having initiated the educational process are scattered throughout Itard's report on the boy. The necessary authority of a teacher over his pupil becomes problematic, exemplifying an unease about all manifestations of authority, and the relation of power to the bodily essentiality of the human being.

Itard's interest in the boy's sense of injustice is crucial here. Late his second report on the boy (1807), Itard engineers an occasion on which he can be arbitrarily unfair to the boy, in order to test his ability to distinguish what is just. The boy passes Itard's test, biting his master. Rather than simply manifesting a revolutionary refusal of authority, the boy's awakened sense of injustice is seen as the product of that authority, educated into being. However, the moment also suggests an innate human quality which may be organised on a social basis. The boy's anger at the deliberate unfairness of his treatment suggests an acceptance of a political system which would remove unfairness. The boy's symbolic poverty and misery therefore belong in a social realm which would seek to alleviate his distresses through the obligations of care:

> It was a very legitimate act of vengeance; it was an incontestable proof that the feeling of justice and injustice, that eternal basis of the social order, was no longer foreign to the heart of my pupil. In giving him this feeling, or rather in provoking its development, I had succeeded in raising primitive man to the full stature of moral man by means of the most pronounced of his characteristics and the most noble of his attributes (Itard, 1932: 95-96).

Itard's studies of the wild boy share the French Revolution's attempt to bring poverty and suffering into the political realm. The book's implicit subject is this politicisation of pity. The feral child manifests the irreducible needs of the body. The original contract that the text draws upon is one in which the materiality of the body is met with the social organisation of an individual benevolence.

Itard draws close to the model that sees society originating in the experience of sympathy. The relation between Victor and Itard operates as an image of that originary moment. The social contract begins in an experience of exchange of feelings. De Man and Derrida have both commented on the theatrical nature of this moment of pity in the writings of Rousseau: "a fictional process that transposes an actual situation into a world of appearance, of drama and literary language ..." (De Man, 1983: 132). In Itard, the staged set-pieces express the short-circuited failure to properly experience the exhange of sympathy.

Itard drew from Condillac the idea that human development occurs through reciprocal exchange with others ("'leurs commerce réciproque'" (Itard, 1801: titlepage)). Before the awareness of others the self exists in a world which appears to press no limits on the satisfaction of its wants. However, the individual experiences this world as constrained and empty. It requires the presence of another to end this lonely liberty.

The remaking of sensation as an education into civilisation, and sympathy as the originary moment of the social are dramatised in a number of passages in Itard's case

histories. However, the most telling is that sequence in which Itard describes the child's solitary joys. When Itard relates the young savage's ecstasy, his peals of laughter when the sun breaks through from behind the clouds or his cry of joy when he sees the field of snow, it becomes obvious that he envies the boy's rapturous and wordless communion with nature. Itard describes how on cold days the boy would sit outside before a basin of water:

> But he did not always manifest such lively and boisterous expressions of joy at the sight of the grand phenomena of Nature. In some cases they appeared to induce the quiet expression of sorrow and melancholy; a remark hazarded in opposition to the opinions of metaphysicians, but which we could not avoid making, when we observed this unfortunate youth, with attention, under the operation of certain circumstances. When the severity of the season drove every other person out of the garden, he delighted in taking a great many turns about it; after which he used to seat himself on the edge of a bason of water. I have often stopped for whole hours together, and with unspeakable pleasure, to examine him in this situation; to observe how all his convulsive motions, and that continual balancing of his whole body diminished, and by degrees subsided, to give place to a more tranquil attitude; and how insensibly his face, insignificant or distorted as it might be, took the well-defined character of sorrow, or melancholy reverie, in proportion as his eyes were steadily fixed on the surface of the water, and when he threw into it, from time to time, some remains of withered leaves. When in a moon-light night, the rays of that luminary penetrated into his room, he seldom failed to awake out of his sleep, and to place himself before the window. There he remained, during a part of the night, staring motionless, his neck extended, his eyes fixed towards the country illuminated by the moon, and, carried away in a sort of contemplative extacy, the silence of which was interrupted only by deep-drawn inspirations, after considerable intervals, and which were always accompanied with a feeble and plaintive sound (Itard, 1802: 40-42).[16]

The elegiac and wistful tone of this passage is unmistakable. Following the description of the boy's boisterous pleasures, the sudden stillness of this moment acquires even greater force. From scenes in which the boy is continually in motion, twitching, running, attempting to escape, the passage slows down with him into an almost motionless attentiveness. Previously, we have seen the boy as constrained by those around him, the

object of imprisonment and coercion. Here, he stills himself. Yet there seems no doubt, in Itard's descriptions, that even the boy's melancholy is experienced as pleasure. The boy's delight in witnessing the world is intense. There is a mixture of wonder and self-reproach as Itard regards the intensity of the boy's sad pleasure in the natural world, the way in which he is wholly given up to his experience. The writer's exclusion from the boy's experience is in part an inevitable result of his scientific intent, and narrative method. The boy's wordless sounds and Itard's dubious "scientific objectivity" mean that the boy can only be described through his external appearance and actions. The close attention to detail in the passage, the steady observation of minutiae, is forced upon Itard by the boy's lack of language, a lack which can still express intense feeling. Insight into his interior life depends upon external manifestations. This generic objectivity, as much as his apparent emotional investment in the boy's feelings and fate, only serves to emphasise Itard's exclusion.

The sense of reproach is heightened when Itard realises that in the process of civilisation the boy's intense rapture must be forgone, and become distanced and understood through the medium of language. What matters to Itard is that we should achieve an intellectual understanding of our sensations, rather than that they should exist only as sources of unmeaning delight or sorrow. Although, in a curious echoing of the boy's experience, Itard characterises his pleasure in the boy as "unspeakable" ("indicible"), the fact remains that it can be articulated in description, the boy's momentary gusts of passion can be evoked in lasting prose. This is Itard's elegy for an experience that he must set out to change.

This echoing occurs at a deeper level also, when the observer incorporates the narcissistic pleasure of the observed. Itard watches the boy, naming his sensations as

"melancholy". The text shares this melancholy: it belongs to Itard, and to the reader. The passage evokes certain traditional "Romantic" associations of sadness. The season is autumn, and the boy's youth is seen to ironically co-exist with an image of its ending, the fallen leaves that he picks up and lets fall into the water. The moonlit night suggests wakefulness and inconstancy: images of transience connect to our understanding of the child. While on the physical level watcher and observed are linked - both rapt before the object of their attention for hours - so Itard's relation to the boy becomes one of sympathy. However, this echoing is one-sided: the boy is oblivious while his observer imitates him.

It is the unmeaning and wordless nature of the wild boy's experience that perhaps disturbs Itard. The boy cannot name his sensations to himself and so bring them into the human domain. These experiences stand outside, and are perhaps antagonistic to the rational values of the Enlightenment that Itard consciously endorsed. His whole project was to direct these intense and irrational experiences into a rational and well-meaning process: in Rousseau's terms, to bring them into the progress of history. Society is excluded from this kind of experience; therefore it can only be a starting-point in the process of civilisation. In this sense the form of Itard's book, which is, after all, a case-study or scientific treatise, enacts the simultaneous placing and distancing of the irrational. The wild boy's solitary reveries are structurally merely one more thing to be noted on his path to civilisation.

The moments described by Itard focus the main subject of his writings on the young savage. He presents the relationship of the civilised to the feral child, taken as a uniquely extreme example of our relation to "otherness". His work is concerned with the difficulty of human relations, of our attempts to communicate with that which is alien to

ourselves. Itard's representation of the wild boy explores the notion of kinship, both as a means of defining what is akin to the human, but also of delineating our attempts at communication. The basis of that kinship is shown to be the experience of sympathy.

Partly this sympathy is pragmatic: its aim is the transformation of the solitary experiences that it witnesses. It may only be through the re-making of these experiences as opportunities for companionship. The intrusion of a companion replaces the voyeuristic position of the scientific observer. However, this notion of companionship is irrelevant in terms of the nature of experience which Itard describes. Itard's knowledge of Condillac would have led him to believe that the feral child experiences the world nakedly, in an intensity which is removed from any ontological notion of an individual indentity. In the *Essai sur l'origine des connaissances humaines*, Condillac writes on the bear-boy of Lithuania:

> Supposing in order to try every hypothesis, that he had likewise remembered the time when he lived in the forest, it would have been impossible for him to represent it to himself but by the perceptions which he would have recalled to mind. These perceptions could be very few; and as he had not remembrance of those which had preceded, followed, or interrupted them, he would never have recollected the succession of the parts of this time. The consequence of this must have been, that he would have never suspected it to have had any beginning, and yet he would only have considered it as an instant. In a word, the confused remembrance of his former state would have reduced him to the absurdity of imagining himself to have always existed, though he was as yet incapable of representing his pretended eternity to himself but as a moment. I do not question but he would have been greatly surprized, as soon as he had been told that he had begun to exist; and still more so when he had been also told that he had passed through different degrees of growth (Condillac, 1756, 1: 132).[17]

Experience happens to the wild boy outside a self, or socially generated artifice of meaning. The individual has no history here, only a continual sensual present, a materialist parody of the *nunc stans*. In such a world, the notion of others cannot exist, as the self

is not even an "other" to itself, having no notion of itself as a thing existing in time.

In such a condition, how can Itard enter into relationship with the young "savage"? The moment at the basin of water expresses the complexity of Itard's relation to the boy. The water acts as a failed mirror, in which the wild boy fails to recognise himself. While the boy stares into the water, Itard echoes his attentive gesture, staring likewise, for long hours, at the boy. The boy's pleasure does not require an other to be present. However, Itard's watchfulness may be felt to be voyeuristic, an intrusion into a privacy. He appears to both yearn for the boy's recognition of himself, since such a moment would prove the success of his education, and also to depend upon the boy's indifference, that as he watches the boy should be looking away. The moment displays two kinds of communication: that between persons, and that between the self and the world. The communication between persons is flawed and uncertain. The communication between the boy and his world is intense and fulfilled. Itard desires the first kind of communication, but instead finds himself envying the quality of the second kind of communication. This envy reconstitutes itself as an imaginative identification, a moment of sympathy, in which the text attempts to share the abundance and melancholy of the boy's experience.

It would be a mistake to sexualise Itard's desire, though there are moments in which the ambivalence of his relationship to the boy is apparent. One of Itard's prime concerns is the control of the boy's sexuality. Itard describes how the wild boy was tickled in order to stimulate his "nervous sensibility":

> In addition to the use of the warm bath, I prescribed the application of dry frictions to the spinal vertebrae, and even the tickling of the lumbar regions. This last means seemed to have the most stimulating tendency: I found myself under the necessity of forbidding the use of it, when its effects were no longer confined to the production of pleasurable emotions;

> but appeared to extend themselves to the organs of generation, and to indicate some danger of awakening the sensations of premature puberty (Itard, 1802: 50-51).[18]

On one occasion the English translator excises a scene in which a paedophilic sexual tension might be inferred. Itard relates the boy's intense relationship with the housekeeper, Madame Guérin:

> The friendship which he feels for me is much weaker, as might naturally have been expected. The attentions which Madam Guerin pays him are of such a nature, that their value may be appreciated at the moment; those cares, on the contrary, which I devote to him, are of distant and insensible utility. It is evident that this difference arises from the cause which I point out, as I am myself indulged with hours of favourable reception; they are those which I have never dedicated to his improvement. For instance, if I go to his chamber, in the evening, when he is about to rest, the first thing that he does is to prepare himself for my embrace; then draw me to him, by laying hold of my arm, and making me sit on his bed. Then in general he seizes my hand, draws it over his eyes, his forehead, and the back part of his head, and detains it with his own, a long time, applied to those parts (Itard, 1802: 74-75).[19]

The French text goes on to describe other habitual tendernesses:

> D'autres fois il se lève en riant aux éclats, et se place vis-à-vis de moi pour me caresser les genoux à sa manière, qui consiste à me les palper, à me les masser fortement dans tous les sens et pendant plusieurs minutes, et puis dans quelques cas d'y appliquer ses lèvres à deux ou trois reprises (Itard, 1801: 49-50).

The English translation then provides the conclusion to this passage:

> People may say what they please, but I will ingenuously confess, that I submit, without reluctance, to all these little marks of infantine fondness. Perhaps I shall be understood by those who consider how much effect is produced upon the mind of an infant, by compliances, apparently trivial, and small marks of that tenderness which nature hath implanted in the heart of a mother; the expression of which excites the first smiles, and awakens the earliest joys of life (Itard, 1802: 75-76).[20]

Both the French text and the English translation are here concerned with embarrassment. In the case of the English translation, the excision strongly suggests an embarrassment about physical caresses that might be construed as sexual. More interestingly, through its

greater openness and willingness to appear ridiculous, the French text reveals an embarrassment about affection as such. Tenderness requires the justification of being indirectly educational. Intriguingly, in order to account for his pleasure and willingness to express affection towards the boy, Itard casts himself in the role of the mother. His own physical caresses replace the awakening force of maternal love. Itard's relationship to the boy echoes that of a teacher with his pupil, and also that of a father with his son. The texts on the wild boy represent a fantasy of parenthood in which the mother is absent - or perhaps projected into the idea of "Nature".

The delineation of these relationships is the means by which Itard describes the nature of the social world. Their very existence manifests the fact of the boy's entry into society. In this, Itard implicitly criticises Rousseau's primitivist ideal of the state of nature. For Rousseau, the bliss of existence in the state of nature is the fact of being free of others. Reciprocal need draws human beings together, but for Rousseau this political union is by its very nature oppressive. The savage lives in solitude, his standards are his own. Social humanity lives in the eyes of others, and "it is, so to speak, from their judgement alone that he derives the sense of his own existence" (Rousseau, 1984: 136).

To return to those moments when Itard watches the boy by the basin of water, or at the moonlit window, here we can see most clearly how Itard faces the internalised solitude of the boy, yearning to draw its narcissistic intensity into the exteriority of social relationships. Yet to remove the boy's experience from this passionate interiority is necessarily to end it:

> I went and sat at the end of the room and considered bitterly this unfortunate creature reduced by the strangeness of his lot to such sad alternatives. Either he must be relegated as an unmistakable idiot to one of our asylums, or he must, by unheard-of labor, procure a little education which would be just as little conducive to his happiness. "Unhappy

> creature," I cried as if he could hear me, and with real anguish of heart, "since my labors are wasted and your efforts fruitless, take again the road to your forests and the taste for your primitive life. Or if your new needs make you dependent on a society in which you have no place, go, expiate your misfortune, die of misery and boredom at Bicêtre."
> Had I not known the range of my pupil's intelligence so well, I could have believed that I had been fully understood, for scarcely had I finished speaking when I saw his chest heave noisily, his eyes shut, and a stream of tears escape through his closed eyelids, with him the signs of bitter grief (Itard, 1932: 73-74).

Here Itard articulates the boy's ambiguous position, both hopelessly removed from society and yet tied to it by society's obligation and his own needs. His speech leads to the boy's grief, though only ambivalently so, since Itard knows that the boy could not have understood one word that he has said. Yet he seems nonetheless to have understood him. The irony of the situation is complete when Itard goes on to mention that the boy's experiences of grief tended to benefit his education, making him more receptive and willing to learn.

As in the earlier scene, the passage indicates the duality in Itard's relationship with the boy. A relationship exists, but its status is compromised, both by its inequality and the boy's retreat into the purely subjective world of his own feelings - a world which can only be observed by Itard as an envious outsider. Yet Itard's texts on the wild boy express a complex and charitable tenderness. Their implicit subject is the difficulty of love. Itard desires to recreate the boy, to reorder his life on the basis of the civilised. Only this process involves the destruction of the world which the boy represents to him, a world of passionate communication with nature. He is trapped in a situation in which all courses lead to failure, particularly as the boy's entry into the social can only ever be half-achieved. More particularly, the objective sign of the boy's entry into society is the existence and quality of his relationship with his new "parent".

The relationship between parent and child may prefigure the social: as we have seen the family relationship had long been an image of the political realm. Yet this relationship is complicated in Itard's terms. Firstly, it is confused with the relationship between teacher and pupil, in which authority and not affection is the constituting bond. Secondly, and most importantly, Itard chooses to be the boy's guardian. This act of choice is one in which the obligations of society become matters of personal responsibility. For better or worse, Itard takes on responsibility for the existence of the child.

Rousseau's idea that society either comes into being in a moment of sympathy or of need may be exemplified here. In placing the origin of society in an emotion, and not in an action, Rousseau secludes its originating force in the hidden and interior existence of feelings. This is suggestive of a kinship which is prior to language. At the moment when Itard observes the boy, sharing in his melancholy, he embodies in words an experience directed away from himself, directed inwards, and expressed only in the pre-verbal medium of a sigh, the "deep-drawn inspirations, after considerable intervals, and which were always accompanied with a feeble and plaintive sound" (Itard, 1802: 41-42). Words are not really required to express the assent of feeling that begins the social world. However, the use of language is that it creates a space between persons in which feelings may be exchanged. The boy shows that while feelings may be communicated without language; it is the medium of words that allows self-revelation, if only because it is in language alone that the passing and transient experiences of the self can be re-ordered and transformed into a history.

The educational process moves the child from these solitary experiences into the development of "generous feelings", the basis of communication with others:

> In the same order of development your Excellency will see the emotional

> faculties first awakened by the feeling of need arising from the instinct of self-preservation, then giving birth to less selfish feelings, to more expansive impulses, and to some of those generous feelings which are the glory and happiness of the human heart (Itard, 1932: 87).

These feelings arise from his relationship with his teacher and with Madam Guérin. The civilised self comes into being through the society of others, though the basis of these higher feelings is necessity, the instinct of self-preservation.

The central sign of the wild youth's arrival in the social realm is the moment in which Itard names him:

> If, by the expression *savage*, we generally understand a man but a little civilised, it will be allowed that he, who is so in no degree whatever, still more rigorously deserves that denomination. I shall continue therefore to apply this name to him until I have explained the motives which have determined me to give him another (Itard, 1802: 16).[21]

Eventually Itard names the child Victor, since the "*o*" sound in that word is one of the few that he could learn. His ability to recognise his own name marks the moment of his belonging. When the boy becomes "Victor" he ceases to be simply the "savage". The name personalises him, it draws him away from the conventional image of the "savage", with its cultural freight of meanings regarding the state of nature. As Walter Benjamin argues in his essay on language, naming something is itself an act of communication, calling the thing named into a relation with the namer (Benjamin: 1986).

If sympathy forms language and inscribes the social domain, since it is in language that we recognise the other, then what is the nature of the relationship between the civilised person and the feral child prior to the latter's acquisition of language? Itard's text suggests that it is one characterised by envy, frustration, affection, exclusion, and desire. These experiences tend towards a moment in which they will qualitatively change, in which the attention of the child will have been gained, in which its unsocial pleasures

are intertwined with social life. Itard's attempts to educate the feral child were, in being so influenced by Condillac and, negatively, by Rousseau, imagined as a process in which the child would be enabled to perceive himself as a self, to achieve self-consciousness and reflection. Inevitably, this achievement simultaneously means the perception of others as others (as Itard would have learnt from Condillac and Tracy). Itard may have been unwittingly sceptical about the end of the education that he had embarked upon. Contrary to his own explicit beliefs, his texts may reveal the traces of primitivism and of a Rosseauist desire for the solitary experience of the state of nature. However, in the inner logic of his narratives is the overwhelming need for recognition by the other. What is at stake in his accounts of the boy is the clarification of his own selfhood, found through his relation to the boy's absolute otherness. Victor is the other who draws him also into relatedness.

Itard's writings on Victor occupy a pivotal position in the history of the feral child. They represent the culmination of the Enlightenment understanding of the universality of human nature, and the collapse of that understanding. When the next major example of the "abandoned child" story was played out in actuality, the terms of discussion were to shift markedly. In the writings on Kaspar Hauser, we witness a return to the uses of romance as a narrative form suitable for the abandoned child, and a return to the idea of the soul as the defining quality of the human. Though, as we shall see, the way in which that "soul" is described bears the marks of the new interest (already witnessed in Monboddo) in a developmental idea of the self.

Kaspar Hauser

CHAPTER FIVE

THE FAMILY ROMANCE: THE STORY OF KASPAR HAUSER

Part One: His Half Murdered Life

It is difficult to give the facts in the case of Kaspar Hauser, since it is precisely these "facts" which are always in dispute.[1] However, I shall begin by setting out, as simply as is possible, the history of Kaspar Hauser, distilling the major accounts.

26 May 1828, Whitmonday was a public holiday in Nuremberg, and as a result that afternoon the city was relatively quiet, the majority of its scant population having left to spend the holiday in the countryside beyond the city walls.[2] In the Unschlittzplatz, Herr Weichmann was lingering outside his front door, talking to his fellow shoemaker, Herr Beck, before setting out for the New Gate, when he saw, some little distance from him, a young man dressed in outlandish peasant clothes.

Something odd in the boy's manner, as if he were drunk, led Weichmann to approach him to see if the stranger was well.[3] The boy held out a letter to Weichmann, addressed "To

His Honour the Captain of the 4th Esgataron of the Shwolishay regiment, Nuremburg". As this captain lived on the way to the New Gate, Weichmann conducted the stranger to the guard house. There the stranger presented his letter to the servant who answered the door, saying "ae sechtene möcht ih waehn, wie mei Votta waehn is" (Feuerbach, 1832a: 4/1832b:14).[4] Nothing more could be drawn from him, except for the repetition of two further phrases "wo as nit" and "Reuta wähn, wie mei Votta wähn is." The boy then collapsed in a state of distress and wept. He vehemently refused all food except bread and water. The townspeople took him for a kind of savage (Feuerbach, 1832b: 15) and led him out to the stable where he stretched himself on the straw and promptly fell asleep.[5]

On the Captain's return, it was discovered that he had never seen the boy before. The stranger was questioned further, but nothing more could be learnt from him, so he was taken to the police station, where he was questioned. At first, the focus of dispute was whether this stranger might be a madman, an idiot, or a "wild man". Nevertheless, one of the policeman presented the boy with a pen and paper, whereon, seeming greatly pleased, the boy wrote out clearly the name, "Kaspar Hauser". However, no further revelations were forthcoming, and the boy fell back into apparently meaningless reiterations of his stock phrases. He also repeated the word "Ross" (horse), over and over, pleadingly. Finally, the boy was taken to the Vestner Tower, which was used as a prison for down-and-outs and vagabonds, and left to sleep in his cell.

Over the next few days the boy remained bewildered, but peaceable enough. One of the soldiers on guard presented him with the gift of a little wooden horse. The boy's joy was so rapturous, and then his misery was so excessive at being parted from his toy at bed-time,

that several others were added the next day. Hauser played with his wooden horses endlessly, absorbedly, hardly noticing what else happened around him.

The letter borne by Hauser was examined and quickly revealed to be, if not a forgery, at least duplicitous. The letter was in fact two letters. The first was written in a mock Bavarian dialect, and the second was written in Latin script, in a disguised version of the same hand. The first letter declared that Kaspar Hauser had been living with its writer since October 1812, during which time he had never been allowed to leave the house. The writer of the letter asked for the boy to be looked after, and allowed to become a soldier. The second letter was apparently from one of Hauser's parents, giving the date and circumstance of his birth. It was surmised that Hauser was an abandoned and neglected child, and he was therefore released from his prison cell to be taken into lodging in the tower with Hiltel, the prison keeper, and his family.

A fortnight after his arrival in Nuremberg, Kaspar was visited by Professor Daumer, who was to play an important part in the establishment of Hauser's fame, and was partly to determine the nature of that fame. A few months later Hauser left the Vestner Tower to move in with this young academic. Unmarried, Daumer lived with his mother and sister in a quiet part of town. He undertook to teach the boy, to educate him from his state of semi-barbarity. Daumer was granted leave of absence from the Gymnasium where he worked to enable him to devote his time to Hauser. He was to write several accounts of his education of Hauser, the first being *Mittheilungen über Kaspar Hauser* (Nuremberg, 1832).

Of equal significance for Hauser's future was a visit paid by Anselm von Feuerbach on 11 July, 1828. Feuerbach was a jurist, and for ten years was President of one of the

Bavarian Courts of Appeal. He was born at Hainichen on 14 November 1775, but grew up at Frankfurt am Main. Following an early marriage in 1796 he abandoned his youthful enthusiasm for philosophy and history in favour of the more practical and lucrative study of the law. His early writings argued against the use of torture in the investigation of a crime. His later works disputed the value of vindictive punishment.[6] His greatest achievement was perhaps the establishment of the Bavarian Penal Code, which was promulgated in 1813. Feuerbach's most significant legal reform was to allow no discretion to the judge, who was to simply administer rigorously the letter of the law. This places Feuerbach's work in the context of a school of legal writers called "Rigorists" (Feuerbach, 1834: xi). With the restoration of German independence in 1813, Feuerbach involved himself with writing patriotic literature. Feuerbach was to act as Hauser's mentor and advocate. In 1832, he published a book on Hauser's story that sealed Hauser's European fame.

Kaspar Hauser was meanwhile subjected to investigation by Herr Binder, the Burghermaster of Nuremberg. Binder's sensitive and kindly questioning led eventually to the first publication of Hauser's story in the form of an official promulgation. The account stated that:

> "He neither knows who he is nor where his home is. It was only at Nuremberg that he came into the world. Here he first learnt that, besides himself and 'the man with whom he had always been,' there existed other men and other creatures. As long as he can recollect he had always lived in a hole, (a small low apartment which he sometimes calls a cage,) where he had always sat upon the ground, with bare feet, and clothed only with a shirt and a pair of breeches. In his apartment he never heard a sound, whether produced by a man, by an animal, or by anything else. He never saw the heavens, nor did there ever appear a brightening (daylight) such as at Nuremberg. He never perceived any difference between day and night, and much less did he ever get a sight of the beautiful lights in the heavens (Feuerbach, 1832b: 55-56).[7]

Hauser was looked after by a man who visited him daily with food and water. (There is no mention of how Hauser organised his excretions). In all his time in the hole, Hauser had never seen the man, who always approached him from behind, ensuring Hauser's back remained turned. The boy's only companions were some wooden horses.

During his first months in Nuremberg many experiments were conducted on Hauser, mostly at the instigation of Daumer. It was discovered that while some of his senses were exceptionally acute (his night-vision, hearing, and sense of smell), in other regards his ability to perceive cognitively was seriously damaged. He could not distinguish foreground from background in looking at a landscape; he conceived of animals as having fully human intelligence; and had no notion of the distinction between animate and inanimate. For this reason, he grew anxious at the sight of crucifixes, and would plead that the suffering man might be taken down. His only skill was for riding horses, which he mastered easily and with enough success to astound his military instructors.

Hauser's education progressed slowly. However, he showed definite improvements, and very soon mastered language, learning to communicate verbally, and to read and write. The torpor he displayed on his first appearance now gave way to an intense and delighted interest in things. Starved of sensation or novelty for sixteen years, he now briefly gloried in a world of innumerable pleasures and new experiences. Barred for so long from the use of his senses, Hauser was now drunk with the plenitude of things. Mingled with this intoxication with the world, Hauser also experienced a hypersensitive panic or disgust. He felt the beauty and variety of things, and yet was burdened by the oppressiveness of their existence. Daumer's experiments discovered that Hauser was sensitive to: thunder storms; the full moon;

brandy; loud noises; quiet noises; squeezed cheese; bright daylight; beer; cats; spiders, snakes, flowers, and grape juice. He was found to dislike beards, the colour black, and comedy.

Hauser began to keep a journal, and rumours circulated that he was engaged in writing his memoirs. These rumours may be responsible for the next turn in Hauser's story. On Saturday, 17 October, 1829, Hauser was taken ill, and so stayed at home that day, missing his lessons. Professor Daumer left him at home while he took his habitual walk before dinner: Daumer's mother and sister were occupied with cleaning the house. Hauser, feeling sick, went to the privy, which was masked by a screen in one corner of the courtyard. There he heard sounds of someone entering the house, and peering behind the screen saw a man covered with black in the corridor. Thinking that the chimney sweeper had arrived (of whom Hauser had an unreasoning terror, as he had of all things that were black), Hauser decided to wait there in the privy until he was gone. After some little time, Hauser peeked once more from behind the screen, found the man close by him, and then suddenly felt a blow to his forehead. He lost his senses, and fell to the ground. On recovering, he found that his face was bloody. He tried to stagger to his room, but felt dizzy, and then, fearing that his attacker was perhaps still in the building, he hid in the cellar, where he lost consciousness.

Hauser had received a knife wound to the forehead (Feuerbach speculates that the assassin had tried unsuccessfully to slit Hauser's throat, but his low position on the privy had saved him), but soon recovered physically from this murder attempt. However, from then on there occurred a noticeable change in his demeanour. He lost his sense of wonder and placid excitement, and became increasingly marked by a brutish dullness and suspicion. The rapid advances he had made in his education slowed, and his guardians began to notice a new

deceitfulness in him.

Five days after this first murder attempt, Lord Stanhope arrived in Nuremberg, where he was detained for some days by an accident to his carriage. While staying at the hotel "Zum wilden Mann", Stanhope heard about Hauser, and decided to take the opportunity to visit him.[8] Stanhope was to become Hauser's guardian, and was to write, after Hauser's death, a refutation of Feuerbach's work on this abandoned child. Philip Henry, the fourth Earl of Stanhope, was a British peer, and a nephew of William Pitt. He had spent some of his youth in Germany. As a young man he had been engaged in a scandalous law-suit against his father. In 1800, he published a popular theological work in German, his *Gebetbuch für Glaübige und Unglaübige, für Christen und Nichtchristen*. On his father's death he returned to England to take up his seat in the House of Lords. He was married with a wife and two children, but chose to live away from home, travelling in Germany as an agent for various Christian societies, distributing tracts, prayer books, and hymnals.

Following the assault, in order to protect the boy and to relieve the failing health of Professor Daumer, Hauser was moved to the house of Herr Bieberbach, a merchant and city councillor. This stay was not a success: Hauser irritated his host family, particularly Frau Bieberbach, who accused him of deceit and boorishness. As a result, Hauser was soon moved to the house of Herr von Tucher, who was appointed his guardian.

Hauser was now eighteen years old. Andrew Lang writes in unillusioned tones of Hauser's later character: "He was very vain, very agreeable as long as no one found fault with him, very lazy, and very sentimental" (Lang, 1904: 134). At Herr Tucher's he was befriended by Stanhope. His guardian disapproved strongly of the relationship: he saw Stanhope as

extravagantly affectionate towards the boy, even passionately so, showering his young protégé with expensive gifts and money. Nevertheless Hauser began to spend a great deal of his time at the inn with Stanhope, and the two were seen daily walking arm in arm through the streets of Nuremberg. Stanhope began to express his wish that Hauser might go away with him, despite the disapproval of both Daumer and Tucher. On 11 November, 1831, Tucher wrote to Stanhope asking him to either assume responsibility as Hauser's guardian or else to cease communication with him completely for two years, since as it was his own position with the boy was being seriously weakened by Stanhope's profligate generosity. The next day, Tucher wrote to Feuerbach, asking to be relieved of his position as Hauser's guardian. So it was that on 26 November, just over a year after moving to Herr Tucher's, Hauser was officially bound to the care of Lord Stanhope.[9]

Hauser and Lord Stanhope left Nuremberg for Ansbach, the home of Feuerbach. Lieutenant Hickel of the Royal Police was appointed Hauser's guard, in order to prevent any repetition of the attack that had occurred in Nuremberg. Hauser's education was to continue under the supervision of Herr Meyer, a schoolmaster (and, according to Lang, a physician) at Ansbach. From now on, these three men, Stanhope, Hickel, and Meyer were to be Hauser's chief protectors. At this time, Hauser's future seemed bright. It was expected that he would at any time move to England and a new life:

> The continued inclination to brood over his destiny, of which Casper must be daily reminded at Nuremberg, being removed, he will begin a new life; as soon as the sails are spread to convey him to England, all melancholy reflections will be left behind him. New air, new modes of life, and new interests of life, will restore freshness and strength to his youth. Probably there is reserved for him in England a quiet, and therefore a more certain happiness, than he (even if he belonged to a race of princes) might have found on the tempestuous sea

> of time, if the hand of wickedness had not made him such an *incognito*; therefore we will not pity his fate any longer (Lübeck in Feuerbach, 1834: 172-3).

However, soon all three of Hauser's new guardians were to turn against Hauser. In time, they were all to accuse him of imposture, of deceit, and of aggrandizing himself with a false story of his origins.

With the distrust of his guardians just beginning to grow, Hauser's position was increasingly beleaguered, and he was constantly threatened with the exposure of himself as the imposter he may or may not have been. Things were made worse with the death of Feuerbach, a few days after Hauser's confirmation. It was the Whitsun holidays of 1833, and four years had passed since Hauser's first appearance in Nuremberg. One of Hauser's strongest supporters and guides was gone, and Hauser was left in the hands of men who increasingly doubted all of his claims. Hauser's only supporters now were Daumer and Tucher, both of whom were far away in Nuremberg.

Stanhope left Hauser in Ansbach, in order to continue his travels around Europe, prior to the move to England that he and Hauser were soon expected to make. While Stanhope travelled, Hauser began work as a copying clerk in a law office. In December 1833, his guardians began to notice a further strange change in the young man's behaviour. He appeared distracted and preoccupied. On 11 December, he mentioned to Frau Hickel that he had an appointment with an acquaintance to watch the boring of the artesian well in the park. Frau Hickel said that he should not go, but should instead visit a friend of his, who was giving a ball. Hauser followed her advice, and went to the ball, where he danced and enjoyed himself.

On 14 December, Hauser left the law office at noon. After lunch, he went to visit his spiritual director, Pastor Fuhrmann, to help with putting up the Christmas decorations. When they had finished the two men left the house together, but Hauser excused himself, saying that he had an appointment to meet a young woman friend of his. However, instead of going to see his friend, Hauser walked directly to the park. It had snowed a few days previously, and the snow was still lying, due to the bitter cold. Hauser said later that he was keeping an appointment with a mysterious stranger who had promised to tell him the secret of his birth. This stranger was to wait for him at the artesian well. However, there was no-one at the well when he arrived, so Hauser wandered across to the monument that commemorates the poet Uz. There he was met by a man, who walked with him to a quiet place, and then, making as if to give him some letter or document, stabbed him hard in the chest, and quickly ran off.

There is an alternative account of the event. Following a row with Meyer over an instance of deceitfulness, Hauser decided to injure himself in order to regain the sympathy and attention of those around him. He walked alone to the park, and there slowly pushed a knife through his thick padded coat. When the knife had pierced through to the skin, he accidentally used too much force. The knife penetrated much more deeply than he had intended, a full two inches into the flesh. Unwittingly, he had given himself his death wound.

In either case, Hauser managed to run home, where he found Meyer, and excitedly told him how a stranger had stabbed him in the park. Perhaps not realising the extent of Hauser's injury, Meyer doubted Hauser's word, and so made the young man take him back to the park to show where the assault had taken place: but before they reached the park, Hauser collapsed and had to be taken back to the house. Hauser took four days to die,

passing away on 17 December, 1833. For much of this time he was lucid, and able to talk with those around him, but as the end approached, he grew increasingly weary and incoherent. The end came in this way:

> Pastor Furhmann, seeing that the last moment was approaching, leaned over Kaspar and said: "Father, not my will," and Kaspar continued, "but Thine be done." "Who said those words?" asked the clergyman. "The Saviour," was the reply. "When?" "When He was dying." After a short silence, Kaspar murmured: "I am tired, very tired, and I have a long way to go!" then turned his face to the wall and died (Evans, 1892: 112).[10]

Pastor Furhmann conducted the service at Hauser's funeral, which was held on 28 December 1833: large crowds followed the body to its grave.

Part Two - The Child of Europe: The Hauser Case

The Hauser case became a European phenomenon: he was known and written about in the newspapers and journals of every European country.[11] Hauser was named at the time "the child of Europe" partly for this reason, and perhaps partly through a sense that a child who has no parents becomes the child not of an individual, but of a whole culture. Something akin to this process occurs with Hauser: the weight of images and narratives that Europe had used to explain its origins came to aid the construction of Hauser's fragile identity.

The main texts that we shall examine in reading the case of Caspar Hauser are: Anselm von Feuerbach's *Kaspar Hauser. Beispiel eines Verbrechens am Seelenleben des Menschen* (Ansbach: 1832); the second English language edition of the same text, featuring additional material by Daumer, Lubeck, and Hauser himself; Earl Stanhope's *Tracts Relating to Caspar Hauser* (London: 1836); and Elizabeth Evans' *The Story of Kaspar Hauser from Authentic Records* (London: 1892); the Duchess of Cleveland's *The True Story of Kaspar Hauser, from Official Documents* (London: 1893); Andrew Lang's *The True Story Book* (London: 1893) and *Historical Mysteries* (London: 1904); Cecil Headlam's *The Story of Nuremberg* (London: 1899). As can be seen from this, in England there are two periods of intense interest in Hauser, the first lasting from 1828-1836, and the second in 1892-1904. This proliferation of texts also leads us to notice that as is the case with nearly all factual accounts of "feral" or abandoned children, there is no complete text which reveals the whole of Hauser's story. The myth is framed within a composite of texts, none of which can assert

a "classic" or definitive nature against the others.

Feuerbach's text was translated in the year of its publication by Henning Gottfried Linberg, an American writer, presumably of German origin, who had previously translated Victor Cousin's *History of Philosophy*. It may be significant that the first translator of the text was American, the history of American transcendentalism perhaps bearing upon the early publication of this text in Boston. The literal translation of Feuerbach's title would read: "An Instance of a Crime against the Life of the Soul (the Development of all the intellectual, moral and immortal parts) of man" (1832b: viii). Linberg decided not to retain this title in the translation, apparently for fear of legal difficulties, or at least incorrectly understood. (He writes: "We are sorry not to be able to preserve this title in English, the reasons for which however, are obvious to the greater part of our legal readers" (1832b: viii)). Instead the work was informatively entitled: *Caspar Hauser. An Account of an Individual Kept in a Dungeon, Separated from all Communication with the World, from Early Childhood to About the Age of Seventeen* (Boston, 1832b). The translation was published in Britain in 1834 by the London firm of Simpkin and Marshall. The translation shows two minor differences from the original text. Firstly, Linberg omits a defamatory paragraph on Herr Merker of Berlin, Counsellor of Police to the King of Prussia, and his supposition that Hauser was an imposter from an English riding troupe. Secondly, the letter Hauser had brought with him is originally rendered in a rough peasant dialect, which Linberg makes no attempt to imitate.

The British text was published in 1834, shortly before Hauser's death. An appendix included additional material, these being translated excerpts from Daumer's first text on Hauser, including material written by Hauser himself, and conjectures by a Herr Lubeck

regarding the location of Hauser's original home. The editor notes that: "The translation has been carefully revised by examination with the German original; and, in those parts of the Appendix which are from the pen of Caspar himself, the style of the original has been closely preserved" (Feuerbach, 1834, iv). The editor of this text thanks Earl Stanhope for directing his attention to this new material.[12]

In considering Feuerbach's text it is important to bear in mind that in a sense it was composed before Hauser's story was finished: that is, in the period following the first murder attempt, when Hauser was still living in Ansbach, near Feuerbach, under the daily protection of Hickel and Meyer. It is in Feuerbach's text that the first indications of what has come to be known as the Baden theory enter Hauser's story: I shall return to this matter in due course.

In contrast to Feuerbach, Stanhope's text was written just over a year after Hauser's death. Its immediate purpose was to exonerate the author in the eyes of a public who considered that he had behaved treacherously or, at the least, inconsistently towards Hauser. Charges of inconsistency were perhaps inevitable. As late as 1834, Stanhope was being quoted as absolutely verifying the details of Hauser's story as told by Feuerbach (Feuerbach, 1834, iv).. In the 1836 text, Stanhope declared his full belief in Hauser's imposture, and his work is a defence of that position.[13] At the same time it is a refutation of Feuerbach's book. The text takes the form of three letters, written to Hickel, Meyer, and Merker - that is the three others connected to Hauser's story who fully shared Stanhope's view of the case. The work was written in German, and published as *Materialen zur Geschicte Kaspar Hausers. Gesammelt and herausgegeben von dem Grafen Stanhope* (Heidelburg, 1835). It was translated into English in the following year and published in London.[14]

Stanhope's thesis is that Hauser came to Nuremberg with the intention of receiving charity from the Captain of cavalry, and perhaps looking for support in beginning an army career. However, for reasons which Stanhope does not make clear, Hauser found himself complying with perceptions of himself as a special and unique child of nature. In other words an attempt to gain sympathy rapidly led Hauser into being trapped in an imposture which he was then forced to maintain for years:

> He also became more and more involved in the story which had been suggested to him; and the longer he acted this part the more difficult must it have been to him to extricate himself from it; till at last he found satisfaction in it, and as Professor Daumer states (in an article in the Universal Gazette of the 6th of last month), "lying and deceit were become to him a second nature" (Stanhope, 1836: 39).

To substantiate his case, Stanhope adopts the form of a legal inquiry - in itself a form which carries an implicit critique of Feuerbach's role in Hauser's life. The respected judge was shown to have forsaken impartiality in order to become an advocate for Hauser (Stanhope, 1836: 76). This analogy both makes Stanhope the prosecuting counsel, and also enables him to portray himself as the unimpassioned observer of events. Stanhope makes some interesting points, in particular concerning the absurdity of some of the experiments conducted on Hauser (Stanhope, 1836: 83-4), but his argument leads him in turn into what might be seen as his own absurdities. He argues for instance that the "assassination" of Hauser was the result of a self-inflicted wound made to gain attention.

The third text we shall examine, Elizabeth Evans' *The Story of Kaspar Hauser from Authentic Records* (London, 1892), depicts Stanhope as the evil antagonist of Kaspar Hauser, and plainly accuses him of planning the young man's murder.[15] She was probably influenced

by Alexander von Artin, *Kaspar Hauser: Des Räthsel's Lösung* (Zurich: 1892). Evans' text was the first pro-Hauser publication in England, since Stanhope's denunciation in 1836. In England, it appears that Stanhope effectively destroyed belief, and hence interest, in Hauser for over fifty years. Similarly, it seems to have been the publication of Evans' work, and the scandal it created regarding its libels against Lord Stanhope, that reawakened interest in the Hauser affair.

Evans recounts Hauser's story from Feuerbach's perspective, arguing for Hauser's origins in the royal family of Baden. In her work the romance elements which were submerged in Feuerbach's text rise to the surface, in a tale of palace conspiracies, intrigues, and murder - the "Baden thesis". Evans' work was itself refuted by Catherine, Duchess of Cleveland in her book, *The True Story of Kaspar Hauser, from Official Documents* (London: 1893).[16] The Duchess of Cleveland was a descendant of Earl Stanhope, and the work is chiefly concerned with clearing her ancestor's tarnished name.

Evans was an American writer, whose first publication was a book on *The Abuse of Maternity* (Philadelphia: 1875). She appears to have moved to England some time before 1892. In the same year that she published her work on Hauser, she also brought out a work entitled *A History of Religions. Being a Condensed Statement of the Results of Scientific Research and Philosophical Criticism*. As might be expected, this work sets out to discredit religion in general, and Christianity in particular. Her Hauser publication was ambivalently received, if the notices attached to later publications are anything to go by. Among some straightforward praise from the *National Observer*, declaring that the work will be "stimulating to the lover of romance", there is the following acid statement from the

Athenæum; "Mrs. Evans has evidently done her best, and her bibliography is good." Following her Hauser book, Evans went on to write the history of a very similar story, concerning the claims of her ancestor Eleazer Williams to be the Dauphin, taken to safety in America following the upheaval of the French Revolution. Eleazer was found abandoned among the St. Regis Indians of Northern New York in 1795. He was brought up as a foundling by Thomas Williams, a half-breed Indian chief. Through a series of fantastic "proofs", Evans sets out to demonstrate that her distant relative was indeed the rightful heir to the throne of France.

After her two romances of "authentic history" (Evans, 1893: v) turned formally to the writing of fiction. In 1895, she published two novels, *Transplanted Manners* and *Confession. Transplanted Manners* concerns Americans abroad, *Confession* is set in Vermont and deals with the inescapability of guilt. In 1897, she published her last book, another romance based on historical events, in this case an account of the love affair between Ferdinand Lassalle and Helene von Dönniges.

Cecil Headlam's *The Story of Nuremberg* (London: 1899) includes a brief recounting of the Hauser story. He cites the Duchess of Cleveland as his source, and clearly sides with her against Evans, describing the claims against Stanhope as "ridiculous" and "impudent" (Headlam, 1899: 107). Headlam is firmly an anti-romantic. He writes of Hauser:

> At a time when Europe was still dripping from the douche of sentimentality in which it had been bathed by the sorrows of Werther and the romanticism of Byron, Kaspar Hauser appeared suddenly in Nuremberg (Headlam, 1899: 107).

Headlam thought Hauser to be an imposter and "half-lunatic", suffering from "the mania of

persecution, an over acute and perverted sense of smell, a restless love of notoriety, and an ineradicable habit of lying" (107).

Andrew Lang wrote twice on Hauser. In 1893, Lang included his story in *The True Story Book*. This work was intended for children, and appears to have been a successor to the first three volumes of Lang's fairty tale series (Lang, 1893: ix). The book consists of a series of fantastic true stories, including that of Tanner's boyhood among the Indians, the story of Rorke's Drift, and Cortes' conquest of Mexico. Here Lang displays the first signs of his later incredulity regarding the claims made concerning Hauser:

> The Duchess of Cleveland's book, *Kaspar Hauser*, is written in defence of her father, Lord Stanhope. The charges against Lord Stanhope, that he aided in, or connived at, the slaying of Kaspar, because Kaspar was the true heir of the House of Baden - are as childish as they are wicked. But the Duchess hardly allows for the difficulties in which we find ourselves if we regard Kaspar as absolutely and throughout an imposter. This, however, is not the place to discuss an historical mystery; this "true story" is told as a romance founded on fact; the hypothesis that Kaspar was a son and heir of the house of Baden seems, to the editor, to be absolutely devoid of evidence (Lang, 1893: xiii).

Lang combines disbelief and the willingness to tell the story as "a romance". By the time he came to write on the Hauser case again, he was to indulge himself in an outright attack on the story's romantic propensities. Lang's *Historical Mysteries* (London: 1904) was written for adults. It brings together a revised series of essays on historical subjects first published in *The Cornhill Magazine* in 1904. Other subjects for discussion include the story of Elizabeth Canning, the deathless Comte de Saint-Germain, and the Gowrie Conspiracy.

Lang begins by setting out the case for the Baden thesis:

> I state first the theory of the second party in the dispute, which believed that Kaspar was some great one: I employ language as romantic as my vocabulary affords (Lang, 1904: 118-9).

His vocabulary turns out to afford him language which is very romantic indeed:

> Darkness in Karlsruhe! 'Tis the high noon of night: October 15, 1812. Hark to the tread of the Twelve Hours as they pass on the palace clock, and join their comrades that have been! (Lang, 1904: 119).

He continues in this vein for some pages. Naturally, the whole thing is a pastiche that both denigrates and luxuriates in the romance elements of Hauser's story. It is possible that the parody is influenced by Shaw's *Arms and the Man*. Lang particularly has fun with the "White Lady of Baden", a ghost who appears in the palace at Baden whenever one of the royal family is to die, and who was mixed up with the supposed disappearance of the infant heir to the throne in 1812. This dual relation to the Hauser myth is symptomatic of Lang's writings on Hauser. It is tempting to see in the differences in tone between the two accounts the signs of a move from the romanticism of the 1890's to the pragmatism of the Edwardian period.[17]

Lang replaces romance with an appeal to the probabilities of the case:

> Thus briefly, and I trust, impressively, have I sketched the history of Kaspar Hauser, "the child of Europe," as it was printed by various foreign pamphleteers, and, in 1892, by Miss Elizabeth E. Evans. But, as for the "authentic records" on which the partisans of Kaspar Hauser based their version, they are anonymous, unauthenticated, discredited by the results of a libel action in 1883; and, in short, are worthless and impudent rubbish (Lang, 1904: 120-121).

Lang even goes so far as to directly criticise Feuerbach:

> In 1832, four years after his [i.e. Hauser's] appearance, a book about him was published by Paul John Von Feuerbach. The man was mortal, had been a professor, and though a legal reformer and a learned jurist, was "a nervous invalid" when he wrote, and he soon after died of paralysis (or poison according to Kasparites). He was approaching a period of life in which British judges write books to prove that Bacon was Shakespeare, and his arguments were like theirs (Lang, 1904:121).

Lang disputes Feuerbach's use of evidence and the consistency of his account. He has even

harsher words for Evans. He first ridicules her, and then declares that she should consider herself lucky that the libel laws in England cannot (unlike Germany) be invoked in slanders against the dead. He presents Hauser as either an imposter (and not a very good one at that) or an "ambulatory somnambulist". I will return later to the subject of Hauser's somnambulism.

Criticism in English of the representation of Hauser in primary sources has been negligible, if not non-existent. Urusula Sampath's *Kaspar Hauser: A Modern Metaphor* discusses the image of Hauser in twentieth century literature in German. Paul Mackensie's article in *Modern Language Review* (Vol. 88, 1993: 905-11), "Kaspar Hauser's Wooden Horse: A Metaphor of Childhood?", offers an account of some recent criticism in German, and a reading of Suzanne Vega's song, "The Wooden Horse". An earlier article in *German Life and Letters* (Vol. 35, 1981-2: 118-137), "Kaspar Hauser in England: The First Hundred Years", lists most of those English works which mention Hauser. He particularly focuses on the image of England contained within the Hauser texts, and the image of Hauser in England.[18]

Kaja Silverman's "Kaspar Hauser's 'Terrible Fall' into Narrative", in *New German Critique* (Number 24-5, Fall/Winter 1981-2: 73-93), concentrates on a reading of Herzog's film. Silverman offers a psychoanalytical reading of the affair. She describes Hauser's move from the cave into the world as a move into history - as we have seen, a conventional reading of "the feral child". She describes Hauser within the cave as a being without boundaries or limitations, an ""oceanic self"" (Silverman, 1981-2: 74). She sees Hauser as being "outside of language and outside of difference": "Much later, after acceding to subjectivity, Kaspar

describes his entry into the symbolic order as a 'terrible fall': a fall from plenitude into difference, from all-inclusiveness into a partitioned world" (Silverman, 1981-2: 74). Though on many levels convincing, this reading of the Hauser narrative lacks any specific grounding in what happens in the numerous texts in which this "terrible fall" is described. Also, seeing Hauser's cave as a condition of unlimitedness, the boy not then knowing the concept of limitation, seems merely to suggest that where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise. In this way, she embodies a feature of narratives concerning feral or abandoned children: that is, a privileging of the natural, and an anxiety concerning culture or language. In Feuerbach's and Evans' narratives, this equates with a belief in society as tarnishing Hauser's innate and otherworldly innocence. Silverman's Rousseauist/Lacanian ploy is to display a Hauser unfortunately trapped by the "phallic signifier" that is language and patriarchal culture, while simultaneously offering an image of escape from the "symbolic order" (Silverman, 1981-2: 74). Silverman's critique repeats a supposed antagonism between the natural and the cultural which is central to most post-Englightenment accounts of the feral or abandoned child, though Silverman is too knowing a critic not to be aware of the "trap" that such a reading draws one into. Acknowledging an indebtedness to Derrida, she points to the opposition "implicit from the beginning of Western metaphysics, between being and meaning; between full self-presence and the loss of that presence in signification" (Silverman, 1981-2: 92). This split repeats itself in Silverman's analysis, and, no doubt, in my own reading of these texts. It alludes to a basic antagonism in the later texts concerning feral children, which manifests itself in various ways, not least of which is a desire for being without meaning, coupled with a sense of disgust regarding the inhuman condition of such being. If Silverman's analysis is

in the end unhelpful it may be because it reproduces these oppositions without attempting to read the complex surface of the narratives in which they first appear.

In considering Kaspar Hauser, it becomes apparent that the primary theme of the story is doubt, or, philosophically speaking, scepticism. This scepticism can in turn be seen to resolve itself into a dispute between "romanticism" and Baconian empiricism. The believers in the Baden thesis, among whom we should include Daumer, Feuerbach, and Evans, are ranged in battle against those such as Stanhope, the Duchess of Cleveland, Headlam, and Lang who seek to prove the pragmatic, but no less fantastic, thesis of imposture. The Duchess of Cleveland writes:

> And yet, with all this, there can be no question as to the result. It is not the highly wrought romance, but the plain and simple truth, that eventually wins the day (Cleveland, 1893: 86).

From the nature of their argument Hauser's position on the faultline between the romantic and the hardheaded grows clear. What is at stake in the representation of Hauser is a view of the world which can include the marvellous, the strange, and the numinous. In short, Hauser exists to prove the validity of romance. For his doubters, Hauser's story places the realm of the fantastic within the psychology of the individual. The external wonders of the romance form (wonders that signal the sacredness of the exterior world) are rewritten as the adventures of the internal psyche.

This distinction should not be taken as watertight. One of the curiosities of the representation of Hauser is that the boy's story contains the seeds of a psychological explanation of the self for those who are also committed to the romantic explanation of his birth. The romantic view can include both forms of the fantastic. Similarly, the debunkers both rely upon the explanatory nature of conscious deception (Stanhope), and can use the idea of unconscious and therefore mysterious psychological forces (Lang). In exemplifying the processes at work in the discovery of the unconscious, the story of Hauser displays the difficulty of making rigid distinctions when we are examining a process that embodies profound and ineffable shifts in artistic explanation. Yet it remains clear that some such process is at work here. The uses of romance and myth which had operated since antiquity are here replaced with the beginnings of an examination of interiority. It therefore seems particularly appropriate that there are links between the story of Hauser and the writings of Freud.

The representations of Hauser raise the question of the veracity of words, of their ability to communicate, and of how language itself might be thrown into doubt once disbelief enters the terms of discourse. The fundamental anxiety which pervades Hauser's story is that over the sincerity of others. Related to this is the question of what constitutes an authentic self, and it is upon such a discourse of selfhood that Hauser's case turns: how can a person

come to be seen as an imposter, as a creator of a false self intended to deceive?

This remains the issue despite the fact that for a contemporary reader, the question of Caspar Hauser's truth or falsehood remains perpetually in doubt, now beyond the possibility of being verified or denied. Also, for other reasons, the question of the actual truth of this story fades into irrelevancy besides the cultural fact that if Hauser did invent himself (his "false"self), or had this self invented for him by those who observed him, it was in order to re-imagine him as an abandoned and isolated child, latterly of royal blood.

There is nothing significant to say about whether Hauser was an imposter or a genuine child of isolation. However, it does seem worthy of examination that the discourse surrounding Hauser should split into legalistic patterns of defence or prosecution, that writers should become advocates or unmaskers. This is especially the case when we bear in mind that this question of truth or falsity is present in the discourse surrounding the feral child from its inception. There is something in this kind of story which defies belief. In writing about these cases the authors struggle with an embarrassment, with the assumption that scepticism will be the initial and inescapable response. In writing on Hauser, this sense of the burden of proof weighing upon the writer becomes most acute. This is precisely because in this case, the doubts concerning the truth of the story are not balanced within the discourse, or merely addressed to some sceptical reader outside that discourse, but actually exist in texts which are concerned wholly with such doubt. The texts exist to prove an argument, and not simply to present a series of facts. In the representation of Hauser there are few "facts". The issue is therefore both the idea of authenticity in the self (the "feral child" having come to stand for such authenticity), and the appropriateness of the kinds of narrative which describe and

manifest the history of such a self.

As always in the representation of the feral child, the question of proof in the case of Hauser assumes a slippery and insubstantial nature. This is most obviously the case in Evans' narrative. One of her sources for many of the suppositions recorded in the book is the autobiography of Hennenhofer, who was, according to Evans, one of the chief conspirators against Hauser, and the attendant to his supposed father, Karl, Grand-Duke of Baden. However, it seems that Hennenhofer did not write these memoirs, that text instead being an anonymous publication ascribed to him. Similarly, and typically, Evans makes the assumption that Hauser was lured to his death by a promise of discovering the identity of his parents. This is despite the fact that there is no evidence from any source, other than Von Artin, to corroborate such an idea. In any case, Artin's "evidence" had been discredited in Germany by a successful libel case brought against him. Nonetheless, this supposition hardens into a fact within a page or two (Evans, 1892: 123-4). A further instance might be the incident of the message found in the Rhine in 1816. The message, written in Latin, reports itself to come from a deposed prince living in a subterranean dungeon. It is signed "S. Hanes Sprancio", on which Evans comments:

> The signature of this mysterious communication, as it stands in the printed notice, has no meaning; but it is very likely that it was incorrectly copied. A slight variation in the rendering would make the signature *Hares Sprauka*, which, by a transposition of the letters gives the name
>
> KASPAR HAUSER,
>
> a coincidence so remarkable as to have been necessarily intentional (Evans, 1892: 11).

These might be instances of a wish distorting the evidence; however, it is also apparent that the evidence is being manipulated in favour of a certain kind of romance narrative - in each

case the shift makes the story more typical of the genre.

This distortion of the evidence finds its echo in relation to Hauser's own person. Much of Stanhope's attack depends precisely upon the fact that he considers Hauser *to appear* deceitful - that there is some quality in him which manifests itself in this way. Hauser is unable to control or to hide it. Conversely, Feuerbach and Evans both insist on Hauser's appearance of absolute truthfulness - and that this appearance is itself a characteristic of the uncorrupted relation between the inner self and the external surface:

> His whole demeanour was, so to speak, a perfect mirror of childlike innocence. There was nothing deceitful in him; his expressions exactly corresponded with the dictates of his heart, that is, as far as the poverty of his language would admit it (Feuerbach, 1832b: 47).[19]

Hauser's identity is judged in this way as originally good, due to the conviction that his inner life is depicted without confusion or falsehood in his external appearance. As with Itard's Victor, the point of dispute or critical attention focuses on the distinction between the interior and exterior. Privileged with language, Hauser becomes a symbol of the conjunction of these two realms, much as Victor, denied language, became a symbol of their eternal separation. In one passage, Feuerbach imagines Hauser's essential goodness in terms of the surface externals of nature: "Mild and gentle, without vicious inclinations, and without passions and strong emotions, his quiet mind resembles the smooth mirror of a lake in the stillness of a moonlight night" (Feuerbach, 1832b: 167).[20] Ironically, Feuerbach unwittingly complicates his intended point with this image, since both mirrors and the moon belong to an iconography of things changeable and open to doubt. Furthermore the mood evoked by his words is far more unsettling than he seems otherwise to have intended. Feuerbach seems to be content

to leave unquestioned what might lurk beneath the surface of the lake - indeed to him it is as if the surface spoke all.

Yet Hauser's supposed place at the motionless surface of things depends upon the *a priori* idea of his truthfulness, and, as we have said, doubt is woven into the fabric of his story. Hauser comes again to resemble Victor, in so far as existing only on the surface invites the possibility of absolute meaninglessness, with no inner truth or referent to ratify the surface symbol. Such is the nature of the expressions Hauser learnt through repetition, and can repeat without any coherent relevance to the situation. In having no meaning for him or for the occasion, they resemble his own nature, which may be formed through an imitative habit.

Though Feuerbach presents Hauser to us as the sign of the soul, the inward, the boy himself is absolutely limited to the surface, the appearance of things:

> Thus came Caspar, unswayed indeed by prejudices, but without any sense for what is invisible, incorporeal and eternal, to this upper world, where, seized and driven around by the stunning vortex of external things, he was too much occupied with visible realities to suffer the want of anything that is invisible to become perceptible to his mind. Nothing, at first appeared to him to have any reality, but what he could see, hear, feel, smell, or taste; and his awakened, and soon also speculative understanding, would admit of nothing, that was not based upon his sensual consciousness, that could not be placed within the reach of his senses, that could not be presented to him in the form of some coarse conception of his understanding sufficiently near to be brought home to him (Feuerbach, 1832b: 138-9).[21]

However, Hauser came from his hole to the "upper world" ('die obere Welt"). This suggests that the hole is to be equated with a lower world, and immediately a hierarchy emerges: at the base is Caspar's hole, above that the world of external reality, and behind or beyond that, the world "beyond all worlds" (Feuerbach, 1832b: 138) ("über allen Welten ist" (1832a: 115)). What characterizes Hauser's unique place, his "hole", is that it is grossly material. His life

there is described in terms of sleep or death, and his mode of living that of an animal (Feuerbach, 1832a: 137/1832b: 115). In fact, this materiality reaches its apotheosis in a description of Hauser as a kind of oyster, aware only of taking its food, perceiving nothing beyond the confines of its own shell. The further analogy that naturally follows is that of the foetus in the womb. It may be the case that Feuerbach is making an indirect allusion to Plato's parable of the cave.

So it is that Hauser's inner state, his early life and childhood, that which is subsumed inwardly into the development of the consciousness exists only as the corporeal, the material. The inner becomes a confined, narrow, imprisoning space. However, Hauser's release is not from the material to the metaphysical, but from the world of the inward and hidden into the light that shines upon the surfaces of things. In tracing this process, Feuerbach affirms the value of the "natural" and unmediated sensibility that is uniquely present in Hauser. In one of the cases in his *Narratives of Remarkable Criminal Trials*, Feuerbach describes the case of Maria Zwanziger ("the German Brinvillier[s]"):

> Married to a man whom she feared and disliked, and who moreover was always engaged either in business or in drinking, leaving her to lead a life of solitude and monotony, which contrasted most disagreeably with the gaiety of her guardian's house, she endeavoured to divert her melancholy by reading novels. "My first novel," said she, "was the 'Sorrows of Werther,' and it affected me so much that I read 'Pamela' and 'Emilia Galeotti.'" Thus uncultivated and frigid natures excite their imaginations to represent as really felt emotions they are incapable of feeling. Such natures strive to deceive themselves as well as others by a mere grimace of sensibility, till at last it becomes so habitual to them, that they are really incapable of distinguishing truth from falsehood, and end by poisoning the very source of truth, the natural feelings. Hypocrisy, falsehood, and malice are fruits easily produced, and fearfully soon matured in a soul accustomed to disguise its real feelings under assumed ones; and thus it is that sentimentality is perfectly consistent with total hardness of heart, and even with cruelty (Feuerbach, 1846: 166).

Maria Zwanziger's empty heart contrasts pointedly with Hauser, who exists for Feuerbach as the personification of genuine, spontaneous emotion. Zwanziger's life is mediated through literature: her sorrows and joys are second-hand and falsified. Hauser's identity forms itself through direct and unmediated experience. (Though as we shall see later Feuerbach himself calls upon a literary work to explain Hauser to the world). Hauser's fall would not be expressed simply within the acquisition of language, but would have to occur through the submergence of the self in the literary. If natural feelings create truthfulness, then, for Feuerbach, Hauser exists absolutely truthfully. His unnatural life has had the unusual result of rendering him completely natural. Feuerbach denied the identification of Hauser as a wild man: he was not a "savage" to be civilised, but a natural man to be learnt from (Bance, 1975: 202-3). Reversing what Itard had declared about Victor, Feuerbach and Daumer assume that Hauser's hypersensitivities, his tastes, and his emotions are an index of what it would be to be fully and naturally human. Hauser's relation to the world really appears to be that of the unfallen.

However, the external world, the place of appearances, comes to be defined as chaotic, and confused: its effect on Hauser is "stunning"; he is seized and driven around.[22] This connects to the curious mixture of intoxicated nausea, the mingled fascination and disgust that Hauser displays in his initial confrontations with the world. At the same time he is shown to be satiated by things: their multifariousness occupies him to the exclusion of the desire for anything beyond. Linberg's translation (Feuerbach, 1832b: 138-9) misses out the significant word "schon": it is the beauty of things which Hauser sometimes sees - a perception of beauty which contains both wonder and an endlessly perplexing anxiety. The

corporeal world that Hauser occupies is therefore enough for him: the surfaces of things satisfy him.

Yet the move through the hierarchy, from the gross physicality of the womb to the world of painful delight, leads to an ambiguous realisation of the "world above all worlds". One remarkable scene in Feuerbach's account illustrates how Hauser is educated into a perception of the metaphysical:

> In order somewhat to overcome his coarse materialistic ideas, Professor Daumer endeavored, in the following manner, to make him receptive of some preparatory notions of the possibility to conceive and to believe the existence of an invisible world, and particularly the existence of God. Mr Daumer asked him, whether he had thoughts, ideas, and a will. And when he acknowledged that he had, he asked him whether he could see them, hear them, &c? When he said that he could not, he made him observe, that he was conscious that there do exist things which we cannot see, nor otherwise perceive externally. Caspar acknowledged this; and he was much astonished at this discovery of the incorporeal nature of our interior being. Daumer continued, "a being that can think and will, is called a spirit; God is such a spirit, and between him and the world, there exists a relation, something like that, between Caspar's thought and his body; as he, Caspar, can produce changes in his own body by his invisible thinking and willing, as he for instance can move his hands and feet, so God can produce changes in the world; he is the life in all things; he is the spirit that is operative in the whole world!" - Professor Daumer now ordered him to move his arm, and then asked him "if he could not at the same time lift and move the other arm?" Certainly! "Now, hence you see then," continued Professor Daumer, "that your invisible thought and will, that is, your spirit, may be present and operative in two of your members at once, and consequently, in two different places at the same time. The case is the same in respect to God; but on a grand scale; and now, you may form some conception of what I mean by saying, that God is everywhere present." Caspar evinced great joy when this had been explained to him; and he said to his instructor, that what he had now told him, was something "real"; whereas other people had never told him anything upon that subject that was right (Feuerbach, 1832b: 139-141).[23]

It is worth considering why it is that this explanation of the metaphysical world should have seemed so "real", so "Wirkliches", to Hauser. Daumer here argues the presence of the

invisible through two analogies. The first refers to the hidden realm of thinking and willing (that is, internalized thought processes). What is at stake here is the idea of the presence of thoughts, which though never translated, even into the fleeting externality of words, nonetheless can be acknowledged to have existence. Hauser's relation to the realm of thinking is of course crucial for an understanding of his story: it is precisely the existence of such a realm which makes possible the idea of his imposture or authenticity. That Hauser may be deceitfully acting a part, while remaining privately hidden from others is the suspicion which operates throughout his narratives. Hauser's acknowledgment of this domain of thought does not simply show that the invisible world of the metaphysical may be comprehended by him. It also acts as a signal that his surface covers a depth, a darkness, which is hidden from his observers.

The second analogy Daumer uses to explain the invisible is probably that which so particularly pleases Hauser. As is commonly the case with metaphysical arguments, Daumer's second analogy is made between the physical and the invisible world. The idea of God becomes subsumed and explained within the tangible physicality of the body. Hauser's resistance to religious ideas is therefore compromised by his acceptance of the world's physicality: he acknowledges the depth by virtue of the surface. Perhaps this reading allies myself with the idea that Hauser only really knows physical surfaces. Yet it seems clear that Feuerbach here stages a process modelled on Plato's parable, or on a Neo-Platonic ascent from the grossly corporeal to the spiritual. Against this narrative, Hauser himself appears as an oppositional voice, pulling back from the metaphysical, from the world of Forms, or from God, and rooting himself in the fleeting, fearful, and marvellous appearances of things.

By analogy, we may argue that Hauser's relation to the narratives which represent him is just such another countering of the ideal pattern that the texts seek to elaborate. Hauser is both embodied in narrative, and not explained by it. Further, Kaspar Hauser represents the confusion of an identity which has no grounds except narrative to provide it with coherence, that narrative itself being confused and having no other grounds for its authenticity than the person whose existence it authenticates. Hauser exists in a groundless ontology. Hauser's very physical appearance suggests just such a dissolution of identity:

> His face, in which the soft traits of childhood are mingled with the harsher features of manhood, and a heart-winning friendliness with thoughtful seriousness, tinctured with a slight tinge of melancholy; his naïvete, his confidential openness, and his often more than childish inexperience, combined with a kind of sageness, and (though without affectation,) with something of the gravity of a man of rank in his speech and demeanor; then, the awkwardness of his language, sometimes at a loss for words and sometimes using such as have a harsh and foreign sound, as well as the stiffness of his deportment and his unpliant movements, - all these, make him appear to every observant eye, as mingled compound of child, youth, and man, while it seems impossible at the first glance, to determine to which compartment of life, this prepossessing combination of them all properly belongs (Feuerbach, 1832b: 164-5).[24]

Here Feuerbach stresses the strange incomprehension that an observer would experience on regarding Hauser. He notes opposites in Hauser which cancel each other out, while struggling to express a middle ground in which antimonies intermingle and remain themselves. The text attempts to express a condition which can only exist in language by way of a paradox. The confusion stems from the physical manifestation of Hauser's own disrupted history. The strangeness lies in the idea that the stages of development which in ordinary people are lived through and absorbed into the structure of the personality, are in Hauser all contemporaneously present and visible.

The Duchess of Cleveland writes of Hauser's unstable character:

> In a report furnished to the police authorities in 1834, Meyer gives a curious picture of Kaspar's powers of dissimulation. He was so different at different times that no one could have believed him to be the same person; and Feuerbach well described his nature as "chameleon like." The every-day face, which he wore to those immediately about him, was neutral and commonplace enough, but instantly vanished if he was in company. Sometimes, when surprised sitting alone in his room, it was gloomy and morose, and looked years older: then changed as if by magic when he saw himself observed. It could wear whatever expression seemed appropriate to the occasion: sometimes the bright intelligence of an appreciative listener; now it beamed with affection and sympathy, and then again, when he was reproved or angered, bore the unmistakable stamp of an evil and vindictive temper (Cleveland, 1893: 41).

Again here we see the distortions of age noted by Feuerbach. The Duchess of Cleveland depicts a protean self, but one which does not find rest or certainty in any continuity of identity. His states of mind are not variations on the theme of himself; they obliterate each other. Rather than a succession of moods, we have here a succession of faces, none of which seems to bear much relation to the others.

In the works of Daumer, Feuerbach, and Evans this external confusion finds an internal echo in the instability of Hauser's personality. Although we have seen how Hauser came to develop an intense delight in external things, initially he only took an interest in horses, and was otherwise marked by a profound indifference to the things around him. Feuerbach mentions once Hauser's infant-like reaching after bright objects, and how he cried when they were not brought to him. However, in general his response to objects was initially one devoid of curiosity or astonishment. Yet then Hauser undergoes an experience of wonder at the things around him, a wonder expressed in the freshness and novelty of his perceptions (Feuerbach, 1832a: 148-9/1832b: 174-5)). This connects Hauser to a Romantic dialectic of

loss and renewal in the realm of the perceptions, of which the most famous example is the poetry of Wordsworth. On hearing something that he did not already know, Hauser would often fall into a state of bewildered stupor:

> Whenever anything was told him that he did not understand, or when anything attracted his admiration or aroused his curiosity, a spasm passed over his face, his features twitched convulsively, and the whole left side of his body (especially the arm and hand) was affected. The convulsive movement was usually followed by a kind of numbness: he stood perfectly still, his eyes fixed, apparently neither seeing nor hearing, his mind turned in upon itself until the idea was seized and mastered (Evans, 1892: 35).

Hauser's confusion and numbness on being presented with the new suggests one of two things: either that these states were his means of defence against the psychical shock experienced in taking in the external world, or that his only possible response was this chaotic or anaesthetic demeanour, since he lacked a repertoire of appropriate responses. His body exists in a state of vulnerability before the pressure of objective things, and is soon made to slip from its balance into a condition of fear and trembling. Leonard Shengold, a psychoanalyst, characterizes these marginal frames of mind as being "a hypnotic or hypnoid state, spontaneous and defensive", a "protective alteration of consciousness" (Shengold, 1988: 85). What is crucial in Evans' passage is that this self-induced (though no doubt unconscious) flight into stillness is motivated not just by the challenges of novel information, but also by the appearance of that which rouses his "admiration" or "curiosity". It is as much the condition of delight as that of pain which induces Hauser's collapse into a sensory blankness.[25]

Hauser's identity maintains itself despite its being continually threatened by what Mitscherlich has termed Hauser's "'pre-genital, almost pre-verbal anxiety'" (Shengold, 1988:

96). Hauser's world is one which may fall at any moment into the destabilising condition of fear. Hauser lives forever on the border of revulsion and terror - frightened by scents and odours, by thunder storms, by clergymen and physicians, by the black hen. Yet, co-extensive with this borderland to fear, lies the equally unsettling realm of desire - existing both as a barrier against such fear (as in Hauser's love of order) and also itself being a condition of excitement close to the stimulation of terror.

Daumer's (and later, Andrew Lang's) depiction of Hauser as an automatist or somnambulist is closely allied to this idea of Hauser's instability of self occasioned by the overwhelming of the senses. Lang asserts that much of the interest in Hauser resulted from cultural fascination with certain liminal and mysterious experiences of human consciousness:

> They found in Kaspar, a splendid example of the "sensitive," and a noble proof of the powers of "animal magnetism." In Germany, at this time much was talked and written about "somnambulism" (the hypnotic state), and about a kind of "animal magnetism" which, in accordance with Mesmer's theory, was supposed to pass between stars, metals, magnets, and human beings [...] Now Kaspar was really a "sensitive", or feigned to be one, with hysterical cunning. Anything unusual would throw him into convulsions, or reduce him to unconsciousness (Lang, 1904: 128-129).

It is possible that the confusions around the "inner" and the "outer" in Hauser's nature derive from a model of the self heavily influenced by a psychology derived from mesmerism and magnetism. Mesmerism was popularised in Germany by writers such as Gmelin, Kluge, and Wolfart (Ellenberger, 1994: 77).[26] Hauser's curious life, which had been, as Feuerbach suggested, "slept away", was perhaps bound to intimate conditions derived from the state of magnetic somnambulism:

> Kluge, in his textbook on animal magnetism, distinguished six degrees of the

> magnetic state: (1) Waking state, with a sensation of increased warmth; (2) Half-sleep; (3) "Inner darkness," that is, sleep proper and insensitivity; (4) "Inner clarity," that is, consciousness within one's own body, extrasensory perception, vision through the epigastrium, and so forth; (5) "Self-contemplation": the subject's ability to perceive with great clarity the interior of his body and that of the person with whom he is put into rapport; (6) "Universal clarity": the removal of veils of time and space and the subject perceives things hidden in the past, future, or at remote distances (Ellenberger, 1994: 78).

It is apparent that these distinctions depend upon an idea of an interiority cast into an external world. It seems appropriate that the aim of German interest in magnetism and somnambulism was an "audacious attempt at experimental metaphysics" (Ellenberger, 1994: 78). The self either exists in exaggerated contemplation of itself, or in exaggerated ignorance of the self ("inner clarity" or "inner darkness"). Hauser can be seen to possess each of these opposites at once. His heightened sensitivity to the outside world, the result of "magnetic" properties, both creates an inner self and annihilates it, returning Hauser through an overload of experience into the condition of a waking sleep.

Daumer's experiments on Hauser result from these beliefs. Bance writes:

> Among a number of celebrated cases studied in such circles, that of the "somnambulist" Friederike Hauffe, born in 1801 at Prevorst was one of the best known in the early nineteenth century. Justinus Kerner's experiments with her were reported in the *Blätter aus Prevorst*, where also, in 1832, an article appeared under the title "Ein Wort über Kaspar Hauser." Daumer thought of Kaspar as a "sensitive" or medium, and his 1828 experiments followed Kerner's, particularly in administering various substances to the subject, with similar results - cramps, spasms, shivering, over-excitement (Büchner's *Woyzeck*, as so often in the Hauser affair, springs to mind here) (Bance, 1975: 204).[27]

Daumer was intensely interested in galvanism, mesmerism, animal magnetism, vegetarianism, and homeopathy. His experiments on Hauser reveal the impact of all of these studies.

At one point, Daumer takes Hauser to see a visiting somnambulist:

> Hauser, by the proximity of this person, was seized with the greatest aversion; in the same manner, on the other hand, she experienced a peculiarly abhorrent effect from Hauser. I ordered him to put on paper an account of the sensation which he felt, which he did as follows: "As I came into the room, and the door of the diseased person was opened, which I did not know, I felt a sudden dragging on both sides of my breast, as if any one wished to pull me into the room; as I went in, and proceeded towards the sick person, a very strong breath blew on me, and as I had her at my back, it blew on me from behind, and the pulling which I felt before in my breast I now felt in my shoulders. As I went towards the window, the sick person followed me. At the time that I wished to ask a question of Mr. Von Tucher, I felt a trembling in my left foot, and it became unwell; she went back again, and that trembling left me; she seated herself under the canopy, and said, Will not the gentleman sit down? [...] Mr. Professor Hensler told her that I was the man who had been wounded; at the same time she noticed my scar, and pointed towards it; then came the air strong upon my forehead, and I felt pain in it; also my left foot again began to tremble greatly. The sick person seated herself under the canopy, and said, that she was ill, and I also said that I was so unwell, that I must sit down; I sat down in the other room: now the other foot began to twitter. Although Mr. Von Tucher held my knees, I could not keep them still. Now a violent beating of my heart came on me, and there was a heat in all my body; that beating of my heart left me afterwards, and I had a twittering in my left arm, which ceased after some minutes, and I was again something better. This condition lasted until the next morning; then I had a headache again, and a twittering in all my limbs; still not so violent. In the afternoon, about three o'clock, it came again, something less, and left me earlier; my bowels were opened, and again in half an hour after, then I was quite well again" (Feuerbach, 1834: 153-5).[28]

Daumer's interests reveal Hauser's story as a myth of sensitivity. Daumer sees in Hauser a person hitherto deprived of sensation, suddenly become hypersensitive, able to feel the mysterious mesmerist fluids that emanate around each human being, to feel the sensation of even a spider entering the room. There may be an element of vanity in this depiction: Daumer too presents himself as another such "sensitive", vicariously experiencing the effects that Hauser himself feels. Hauser exists as a person who is open to the world in ways which

are denied to the civilised. This sensitivity opens out in an expansion of the self before the world, and then finds itself open to violence attacks from within society. Daumer notes Hauser's fall from sensitivity, his decline into ordinary feeling. Of course, this is the central myth of the romantic poet as sensitive failure, embodied most notably in the example of Coleridge Keats. Central to this image is that of the individual who is too good for this world - an idea which implies that the social is evil as such. Society crushes the unusual person.

Curiously, in his *Narratives of Remarkable Criminal Trials*, Feuerbach himself writes the case history of another automatist.[29] John George Sörgel, the "idiot murderer", confessed to killing a man, chopping off his hands and feet, and drinking his blood. However, both murder and confession appear to have been undertaken in a trance. Coming out of this "hypnotic" state, he was unable to remember anything of these horrific events. Feuerbach judged Sörgel to be guilty but insane, and he was sent to an asylum, where he died shortly afterwards.

Lang argues that Hauser was another such automatist, losing his sense of identity through access to an hypnotic condition. These suppositions carry further the central idea of a fracture in Hauser's identity. His sensitivity to experience as well as the apathy of his overloaded consciousness display a nature which cannot be made to cohere. Hauser's lapses of self, his perpetual recourse to the silence and deadness of his lost years, deny him the stability of a life built upon memory, the sense of a succession of moments in time. Fallen into a gap within himself, he reaches out to a world which at all points overwhelms him with its power and strangeness.

The fundamental conflict of desire and fear in Hauser's nature finds its counterpart in

aspects of the narratives used by Feuerbach, Daumer, and Evans, and even more forcefully in those fragments of Hauser's autobiographical or personal writingss. A radical insufficiency charaterizes Hauser's own language - it is at first a discourse without access to meaning, and then a language fractured and incomplete:

> Yet, his first attempts to speak remained for a long time a mere chopping of words, so miserably defective and so awkwardly helpless, that it was seldom possible to ascertain, with any certainty, what he meant to express by the fragments of speech which he jumbled together. Continuity of speech or consistency of narration, was by no means to be expected from him; and much was always left to be supplied by the conjectures of the hearer (Feuerbach, 1832b: 52).[30]

In this way, the observer necessarily fails to decipher Hauser. Lübeck writes:

> It will be farther objected with respect to the proximity of Nuremberg, that Caspar Hauser himself has declared that he spent two or three days in his journey. Declared? Yes, as well as anything can be considered a declaration by such a neglected youth, who knows scarcely fifty unconnected words, not understanding the meaning of one of them, and who, of all the objects between heaven and earth, has, in truth, heard, seen, and perceived nothing. What is called his declaration is nothing more that what the Burghermaster (Binder) at Nuremberg, has made out at random, from some words and signs when he was interrogated. Not to misunderstand the proper meaning of the question, and to see the true connexion of the business, was, under such circumstances, almost an impossibility (Feuerbach, 1834: 163-4).

Hauser exists in absolute ignorance of himself and his history: "'He neither knows who he is nor where his home is'" (Feuerbach, 1832b: 55). This hollowness finds its counterpart in Hauser's words, which also seem to lack meaning: his first experiments with writing end with him producing meaningless lists of words - and even his work as a copyist in a law office manifests this meaninglessness, since it is hard to imagine that a man of his background could fufil the requirements of such work in other than a mechanically imitative way, and so without significant understanding. (It also is one of the many places where the representation of

Hauser might remind us of Dickens). Feuerbach seems to imitate this lack of a centre in one passage where he describes the enigma that Hauser embodies:

> This history of the mysterious imprisonment and exposure of a young man, presents, not only a fearful, but a most singular and obscure enigma; which may indeed give rise to innumerable questions and conjectures, but, in respect to which, little can be said with certainty; and which, until its solution shall have been found, nust continue to retain, in common with all enigmas, the property of being enigmatical" (Feuerbach, 1832b: 63).[31]

The convoluted manner in which Feuerbach leads the reader into a tautology can be seen as the *reductio ad absurdum* of the text's tendency towards unknowability and incomprehension.

In this context, we should examine further the nature of Hauser's relation to language. When Hauser first arrives at Nuremberg, he is able to write his name, but is unable to answer to it. For him, there is as yet no inter-relation between spoken language and written signs. Moreover, spoken signs themselves are arbitrary to him, retaining only a personal meaning. This can be seen most clearly in Hauser's own narrative of his arrival at Nuremberg. Here Hauser is waiting in his cell:

> I heard the same thing as I had heard at first, but I mean, however, that it was somewhat different, as I heard it much louder; it was not the same, but (instead) that the clock struck, it was become sounding. This I listened to a very long while; but when from time to time I heard it continually less and less, and when my attention was at an end, I said these words, *Dahi weis wo Brief highört*, by which I meant to say, he might also give me such a beautiful thing, and not always teaze me [...] I began to weep again, and said the words which I had learned, by which I meant, Why are the horses so long without coming, and let me suffer so much? I wept a very long time, and the man came no more. I heard the clock strike; this always took away half of my pain, and on which the thought comforted me, that now the horses will soon come. And during this time, as I listened, a man came to me, and asked me all manner of things; perhaps I gave him no answer, as my attention was turned towards what I heard. He seized me by the chin, and lifted up my head, by which means I felt a frightful pain in my eyes from the day-light. The man of whom I now speak, was he that was shut up with me, therefore I did

not know that I was shut up. He began to speak to me; I listened to him a very long time, and constantly heard other words; then I said to him my words already mentioned, *Dahi weis wo*, &c.; by which I meant, What is that which has given me so much pain in my eyes when thou hast held up my head? But he had not understood me in what I said; he had well understood what the words signified, but not what I meant. He let my head go, seated himself near me, and continually asked me questions. In the meanwhile, the clock began to strike [...] I said to him, *I möcht ah*, &c., by which I meant, that he should give me such a beautiful thing; but he understood me not, as to what I meant to say; he continued to speak, however: I began to weep, and said, *Ross ham*; by which I meant to say, he shall not always plague me so with speaking, all this gives me very great pain. He stood up, went away to where he lay, and left me to sit alone. I wept a very long while; I felt a great pain in my eyes, so that I could not weep any longer. I sat alone a very long time, then I heard something quite different, upon which I listened with such an attention as I cannot tell. What I heard was the trumpet in the Emporer's stable; but I heard not this long, and when I heard it no longer, I said, *Ross ham* - he shall also give me something so beautiful. Then the man came to me here, and said several times the words which he had spoken before, very slowly at first, and I said after him; he said, Dost thou not know what this is? I said these words to him several times, by which I meant to say, he shall give me the horses soon, and must not always plague me so. The man now stretched out his hand towards the water pitcher, which stood under my bed, and wanted to drink, but I stretched out my hand towards it, and said, *Ross ham*. The man gave me the pitcher forthwith, and let me drink; when I had drank the water, I became so lively as cannot be described; I asked him for the horses. I said, *Ross ham*; upon which he said several times, I know not what thou wantest. I said also the same words after him, but I could not immediately speak after him so clearly, and I said, *I wös net*, and by *Ross ham*, I meant to say, that he should also give me my horses. He understood not what I had desired, and stood up, went to the place where his bed was, and left me to sit alone [...] Just then, *Hiltel*, the keeper of the prison, came, and brought the bread and water, which I knew again immediately, and said to it, *I möcht ah*, &c., by which I said to the bread, Now go not away again, and let me not be plagued any more. He laid the bread down by me; I also took it up in my hand immediately; he poured the water into the pitcher, and set it down upon the floor. Just then he began to ask me questions. He questioned me with so harsh a voice, that it caused me much pain in my head, upon which I began to cry, and said, *I möcht ah, &c. I wös net. In gross Dorfs da is die Voter.* These words I made use of without distinction to get what I wanted. The keeper of the prison went out, as he had not understood me; he knew the words well, as to what they meant, but not what I had wished to express by them, and I also understood not what he had said to me (Feuerbach, 1834:

140-144).[32]

This long passage conveys the complexity of Hauser's style. This complexity derives from Hauser's ignorance, but, as is traditionally the case with the "feral" child, this lack releases meaning. There are certain stylistic features which reveal much of Hauser's internal world. The repetition of phrases (both his own and other's) suggests a world in which differentiation struggles to overcome a deadening sameness. The suppression of causal material establishes the dreamlike sense of consequentiality: for example, it can seem for a moment that the man's absence is somehow caused by Hauser's weeping, rather than his weeping being caused by his abandonment. Hauser indiscriminately imparts rational purpose to inaminate things - the non-arrival of the horses is a small example, his address to the piece of bread a more striking one.

More pertinently, the passage clarifies Hauser's relation to the world. The passage dwells insistently upon the mutual incomprehension in which Hauser dwells. This delineation of the relationship with the "feral" child as one in which otherness prevents even the most ordinary approach to relationship is by now a familiar one. Indeed the very purpose of such narratives is to reveal forcefully the absolute extraordinariness hidden within the very texture of human relationships. They highlight the enormous cultural presences, the shared histories, the common understanding, the intrinsic sympathies, which ground every human contact. Especially poignant here is that we witness from within Hauser's exile from these presences, these histories. Hauser's painful failure to connect reproduces and reconstitutes from moment to moment the prison from which he has just been led: "... he had not understood me in what I said." Meaning and expression exist here cut off from relation to one another. The result

is impoverishment, misunderstanding, a pleading for something to arrive that never seems to come, and finally a sense of persecution, as questions are repeated without any response ever being sufficiently available. When, a little later, Hauser writes out his name for his questioners, in retrospect he knows "and this was my name, but I have not known what I have written" (Feuerbach, 1834: 145). As meaning vanishes the only clear thing in Hauser's senses is the desire for beauty, reiterated over and over, the desire to have things there pleasing to the self, that might sustain its dissolving centre for a while.

Part Three - Soul Murder

Hauser presents the spectator with the shock of newness: his first appearances are characterised by a sense of strangeness - moments of what might be termed "misrecognition". His disconcerting newness fits into none of the pre-existing structures of communication - he may be a wild man, a lunatic, a vagabond, an imposter, and yet adheres to none of these categories absolutely. These categories in themselves are of value only in so far as they record the adjustments that the perceiver makes in trying to allievate the strangeness of the other. That Hauser's story begins in a moment of misrecognition is the first sign of its affinity to the principles of Shakespearean romance. The story moves into action through a moment of disruption, of the intrusion of a person who destabilises the certainties of perception. In *The Winter's Tale* and *Cymbeline* this initiating misrecognition occurs when a husband ceases to know adequately his wife. Caliban's position in *The Tempest* is even closer to that of Hauser. Caliban's ambiguous status, his only equivocally belonging to the human order persists throughout the play, and is only provisionally transcended in Prospero's closing words concerning him. In Hauser's story, this moment of extremity is located in the meeting of the outsider and the safe, bourgeois world. This fundamental and originary moment provokes a story that will lead to the moment of recognition/anagorisis, in which the uncertainty of knowledge is healed by the re-entry of the rejected into the schemata of the known.

The repeated presentation of Hauser's individual uniqueness can be allied to this trope

of misrecognition. We never forget that the circumstances of his history mark out him out from all other examples of humankind. This presentation of Hauser as unique, and therefore as uniquely alone, is at its strongest in Feuerbach's text:

> No other being than one who has experienced and suffered what Caspar has, can be what Caspar is; and he whose being indicates what Caspar's does, must have lived in a state such as that in which Caspar says that he lived (Feuerbach, 1832b: 78).[33]

In terms which may remind us of the account of another abandoned and isolated child, the creature in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Feuerbach presents a being to us who is absolutely alone, the only creature of his kind:

> As a mature youth who has slept away his childhood and boyhood, too old to be considered a child, and too childishly ignorant to be regarded as a young man; without companions of an equal age; without country, and without parents and relations; as it were the only being of his kind - every moment reminds him of his solitude amidst the bustle of the world that presses upon him; of his weakness, feebleness and inability to combat against the power of those contingencies that rule his fate; and above all, of the dependence of his person upon the favor or disfavor of men (Feuerbach, 1832b: 168-9).[34]

Circumstances place him in the position of one beseiged and exiled from the ordinary contacts of social life. His uniqueness, which is also a unique vulnerability, puts him at one remove from

others - the history which ratifies his existence, and makes him what he is, is also the condition of his alienation, a separating barrier between himself and the world of people.

This sense of Hauser's radical newness is present in all the imagery that attaches to him, whether he is presented as an animal, a child, or a savage: Hauser is described as childlike or "savage" throughout Feuerbach's and Evans' texts. In each case the metaphor which seeks to comprehend Hauser, to draw him into the world of the known, with its

established relations between things, is such that it seeks to preserve and to place Hauser as a sign of the innocent and primitive. We can doubt if these images stretch to accommodate his newness, and are not inevitably an attempt to place him within certain pre-existing structures or series of metaphors and similes traditionally used to describe the new. These structures and similes carry with them a conventional cultural freight that links the idea of absolute novelty to wildness, innocence, and so on.

However, as I have begun to argue, Hauser's own language and its relation to the world enacts a much more unsettling disturbance of the boundaries between referents and things - the very boundaries which Feuerbach's images reinstate by virtue of their familiarity. This becomes particularly clear in Hauser's disruption of the distinction between the animate and the inanimate - a boundary upon which our cognition of the world is organized. For example, Hauser's linguistic relation to horses breaks down the meaning of the word that he use - on his first arrival, he repeats the word "ross" over and over, as a kind of plea, attaching the name to anything which attracts his delighted attention. The disruption of the word's field of significance is primarily the result of Hauser's mental impoverishment: the word must serve all occasions. However, this is precisely the centre of Hauser's conundrum, and that of the feral child in general: that deprivation is seen to release vision, to break down and re-order the patterns upon which civilised life is founded. It is also seen to reorganise the perception of human beings within the structural order of that life. Hauser, who sees no distinction between the living and the dead, between the natural and the artificial, acts as a sign, not of the "unimaginable" - Foucault's mythical category - but of the possibility of seeing differently.

Of course, it is this difference of vision which links Hauser metaphorically to the

animal, the child, and the savage - these standing (among others) within our culture for the places from where things might appear otherwise. It is clear that this metaphorical linkage organises Feuerbach's perceptions of Hauser, so that apparently trivial details, such as Hauser's determined preference for the colour red, are seen in terms of the tastes and ideas of children and savages. The image of Hauser as child is also present in Stanhope's and Evans' texts, although in such a way as to make it clear that what is also at stake in the representation of Hauser is the contradictory cultural image of childhood and consequently the idea of human innocence. Where Stanhope depicts childhood as a fallen and corruptible state, Evans clings to the image of original innocence. For instance, Evans' insistence on Hauser's childlikeness and, in particular, his sexual naïviety, is therefore plainly Rousseauist: it aims to defend an image of the uncorrupted human being. Stanhope's more cynical presentation of childhood as a condition of deceit, obduracy, and sullen ill-will links more indirectly with the image of the child (and therefore the adult human being) as corrupt and fallen. Given the dualistic image of the child in their cultural heritage, it is not surprising that Evans should argue for Hauser's authentic truthfulness, while Stanhope insists on his imposture. Authenticity requires innocence, whereas imposture requires the capacity for deceit. The ideologies of childhood are also shown to be linking into an even more fundamental cultural contradiction.

As Hauser's narratives, as written by Daumer, Feuerbach, and Evans, explore the manifestation of innocence in a corrupt world, it is necessary to consider how the young man's innocence is presented in the texts - particularly as that innocence is the pre-supposition and focus of these writers. The manner of depicting Hauser's innocence becomes the point

of exploration for Leonard Shengold in his chapter on Hauser in his psychoanalytical study, *Halo in the Sky: Observations on Anality and Defense* (New York and London: 1988).

Shengold rightly declares that the truth of Hauser's origins are "beyond any establishing" (1988: 83), but nonetheless appears convinced that Hauser's story was what the boy described it to be, and therefore implicitly rejects claims of Hauser's imposture. Shengold's text proceeds on the basis of a theory of the self's unity, derived from Freud's theory of the "triebe" (drives / instincts), in which all parts of the self (language/body/psyche) are reconciled and intertwined with one another. This self is initially formed in, and evolves from, the body. Following Freud's model, Shengold describes an ego that is formed from bodily sensations, chiefly from those on the surface of the body (1988: 13). Curiously, this repeats in part Feuerbach's thematic elaboration of Hauser's biography that begins in the corporeality of the hole. Within Shengold's schemata of the self, the anus and the bodily sensations associated with it assumes the position of one of the sites where the transition of the bodily to the non-body occurs. In its status as a barrier and a passage between the internal and the external, the anus goes on to signifiy to the ego the function of defence and aggression, associated with fantasies of invasion and expulsion.

As I have already suggested, a psychoanalytic reading of Hauser's case seems particularly appropriate, considering both its relation to psychoanalysis through its influence on Schreber, and its pivotal position in the mapping of the unconscious. The link with Schreber is easier to trace. It seems certain that Schreber had read Feuerbach's account of Hauser, from which he took up the phrase, "soul-murder". Through Freud's analysis of Schreber's autobiography this phrase entered the discourse of psychoanalysis. In Schreber's

terms, "soul-murder" is equivalent to both incest and also castration (Schreber's anxiety about being made into a woman). Yet the term itself remains a slippery one. How can one kill the soul of another, and yet leave the victim alive? This no doubt raises the question of what Feuerbach considered the "soul" ("seelenleben") to be; I shall say something about this later in this chapter. Shengold argues that the concept means: "... killing the joy in life and interfering with the sense of identity of another human being. It is primarily a crime committed against children" (Shengold, 1988: 79).

Shengold assumes from the available information that Hauser was conventionally brought up by his mother until the age of around six months, and then was probably committed to the care of a nurse until he was three or four years old. He was then incarcerated in the manner that he described until his sixteenth year. Although Hauser bears some of the traits of an autist, Shengold is clear that Hauser was not autistic.

Evans approaches Hauser's innocence in terms of his "saintly" qualities, his "supernatural perfection of character" - a perfection which is tarnished by contact with the ordinary qualities of human beings. Her Hauser is neat, orderly, obedient to authority, refined, truthful, and forgiving. Only once does she show Hauser expressing any condemnation of the man who had locked him up for the greater part of his life. (It is clear from the sources that there was actually more than one occasion in which Hauser expressed such hostility (Feuerbach, 1834: 149-50)). Shengold depicts this "goodness", his detestation of shows of violence, and his absence of expressed anger, - most tellingly exemplified in his protestations of love towards his killer - as a defence against a rage which he had been forced to repress.

Just as Evans (and Feuerbach) praise Hauser for this apparent absence of anger, she also celebrates his absence of sexual desire. Again, psychoanalytically one might argue that Hauser is in fact being praised for the repression of such desire. It seems that the representation of Hauser's "innocence" involves a need to deny both sexuality and passionate emotion. The image of innocence as such becomes in Hauser a neutered innocence, in which the complexities of emotional response are attentuated into the freshness of sensual perception. Hauser's emotional life coalesces around the seemingly unproblematic nature of his perceptions of the external world. Hauser is denied active and passionate responses, and appears instead in the position of a passive perceiver - the recorder for others of a distinct mode of seeing the world (these shifts in "normal" vision are often, but not exclusively, visual). Hauser placing as merely passive is integral to his story, in so far as his passivity derives from his being a sufferer - somebody who is literally physically immobile for thirteen years of his life. Even Feuerbach's praise of Hauser's obedience might seem to a contemporary reader to be an endorsement of passivity which now reads as a negation of life.

We now read Evans' insistence on Hauser's asexuality, or chastity, through our awareness of Freud's presentations of the sexuality of children, but even without Freud the reiteration of this point would strike a reader as curious. It is as if Evans' wish for Hauser's innocence involves a desire to place him outside his body (the body of an adolescent male), and to depict his body as being in a state as arrested as that of his mind. Hauser's original goodness, his "'perfect innocence of soul'" (Evans, 1892: 32) is therefore equated with his "dormant" sexual instincts (Evans, 1892: 49) Furthermore, Hauser's own interest in women is based on their capacities in non-sexual areas, and typically it is expressed in frankly

misogynistic terms: "whereas he at first distinguished females from males only by their clothing, he now seemed to judge between them by their respective capacity for intellectual achievement and general usefulness, to the great advantage of the masculine portion of the race [...] His idea of a woman appeared to be a vain, lazy, useless creature, dressed up in feminine apparel" (Evans, 1892: 49-50). Nonetheless Evans sees Hauser's condition as an "'angelic purity'". He is even described by Von Tucher as "'A being such as we may imagine in Paradise before the fall; a precious, unique, ever to be remembered embodiment, which shone like a ray of heaven's own light upon this impure, degraded world of sinners'" (Evans, 1892: 45). Hauser's pre-lapsarian condition marks him out from other children, who have been tainted by the condition of society. Evans' depiction of Hauser as sexually innocent even persists despite her unexpected and revealing insinuation that he had some kind of homosexual "relationship" with Stanhope, at the older man's instigation. Stanhope, who refused to live with his wife, is said to have shown towards Hauser "an affection so excessive as to disgust right-minded persons and create suspicion as to the honesty of his intentions" (Evans, 1892: 148-9). Evans depicts the two men as "unnaturally" close, citing Tucher's suspicions of the Englishman. (It is possible that Evans' desire to accuse Stanhope of "unnatural vice", as well as murder, overcame her desire for consistency). Similarly, Hauser's flirtation with the servant-girl at the Meyers' home merely calls forth a reiteration of Hauser's unspotted innocence: "whatever other faults might justly be laid to his charge, in sexual matters he remained innocent to the last, unconscious, and therefore untempted" (Evans, 1892: 96). Hauser here shares in some of the factors that determine the cultural image of childhood. The adult's investment in the idea of the child is a matter of imagining all that they

have lost as still somehow present in the figure of the child.

Beyond the debate over Hauser's sexual innocence is the broader ontological question about innocence, and how its nature is embodied within Hauser's story. Shengold portrays this innocence as a quality of openness towards the world allowed by a child's sense of invulnerable omnipotence. He describes Hauser's brief "love affair with the world", which is expressed in his wonder and curiosity, as manifesting an opening out of himself towards the world. However, Hauser then returns to a state of brutish apathy - a state which is induced by the first murder attempt, although it is present within what Shengold sees as Hauser's condition of defensiveness. This defensiveness stems from a self unable to cope with anger in the self or directed against the self, and which therefore deals with that anger by imaginatively turning the world to "shit" as an act of primal rejection. This process appears in Hauser's case by a descent from enthusiasm to deadness, and then down into the condition of irritation and apathy.[35]

Hauser's essential fear and anxiety find their objective realisation in the first murder attempt. The hostile world becomes personified in the figure of the "black man" - doubly so, given Hauser's antipathy to black creatures.. Following this assault, Hauser returns metaphorically to his state of life in the "hole". His residual indifference, incuriosity, and stupidity reasserts itself as the only personality that he has recourse to: it is in this way that the crime of "soul murder" ends. Hauser becomes an accomplice in the murder of his own soul.[36] The innocence that Hauser possesses is therefore from its inception, weak, vulnerable, and fragile: it requires a world free of hostility or fear, having no resources of its own to deal with these inescapable presences. Shengold remarks that for the individual whose

development has not been so disrupted, the renunciation of our imagined position in the world as invulnerable is (or can be at its best) essentially loving and creative, a recognition of the limitations of the self. Hauser, whose disturbed childhood allowed no psychical resources to enable this transition, was thrown back into the condition of an automaton, abandoning feeling because it lacks the strength to absorb the hurt that accompanies it. Hauser's innocence is therefore essentially incomplete and impossible to sustain. Consequently, before the end of his life, he had already lapsed into a state of deadness, made more poignant by a sense of what he had lost:

> The extraordinary, almost preternatural elevation of his senses, has also been diminished, and has almost sunk to the common level. He is indeed still able to see in the dark; so that, in respect to him, there exists no real night but only twilight; but he is no longer able to read in the dark nor to recognise the most minute objects in the dark at a great distance. Whereas he was formerly able to see much better and more distinctly in a dark night than by day-light, the contrary is now the case. Like other men, he is now able to bear, and he loves the light of the sun, which no longer distresses his eyes. Of the gigantic powers of his memory, and of other astonishing qualities, not a trace remains. He no longer retains anything that is extraordinary, but his extraordinary fate, his indescribable goodness, and the exceeding amiableness of his disposition (Feuerbach, 1832b: 177-8).[37]

Part Four - The Family Romance: Hauser as the Abandoned Royal Child

Set against the unsettled reality that anxiety produces are the "certainties" of narrative - certainties which nonetheless are revealed to be hypothetical, and are therefore undermined by the disturbances of doubt. This is particularly the case for Kaspar Hauser since the narrative employed to describe his history inevitably tends towards the condition of "romance" - an artificial and fictional mode of storytelling, typified by its distance from reality and its embrace of "fairy-tale" motifs and modes. The accusation that Hauser's story is mere romance is a common feature of the narratives intended to discredit Hauser as an imposter: we have already read Lang's remarks concerning "Feuerbach's romantic narrative ..." (Lang, 1904: 122). It is from Stanhope that we first learn to think of Hauser's story as a romance, when he attacks Hauser's veracity and Feuerbach's methods:

> But before I come to the consideration of these official documents, I must examine a little of Feuerbach's Romance. He himself, taught by his own experience, began, in the last period of his life, to doubt the truth of his narrative, as I have learned from a witness, in every way deserving of credit, [who] said, "Perhaps Feuerbach has written a romance in his old age." He did not, however, allow the matter to be further investigated, and did nothing towards rectifying the errors which he himself had disseminated, and to throw light on a story which had received great weight from his authority (Stanhope, 1836: 49-50).

While obviously intended as an insult, Stanhope's description of Feuerbach's text is also astute criticism. For his own part, Stanhope's work itself may be characterised as anti-romance, deconstructing the original fable by an appeal to the "facts" - much as Tyson's work on the pygmy aimed to find a scientific and rational explanation for the poetic. This attack

upon the fabular nature of Hauser's story for being inherently incredible may also mark out Stanhope as a bad reader of Feuerbach's text: as someone instinctively unsympathetic to the nature of such a narrative. However, what excuses Stanhope from this charge is that both he and Feuerbach have the same objective, that is, the elucidation of Hauser's origins and self in terms of the available facts. Where Stanhope criticises Feuerbach is in his attempt to make a romantic story of Hauser's life. Furthermore, he condemns what he considers the culpable falsification of facts which results from such an attempt:

> Such a falsfication of history, as is shewn in the points above mentioned, would have been conceivable if Feuerbach had been a writer of romance, or a poet. It is not, however, permitted or pardonable in a Judge, to whom truth should be sacred, to trample it under foot in order to defend his theory (Stanhope, 1836: 58).

Where Stanhope does a disservice to the facts is in not recognising that sometimes reality may itself take on the nature of romance - that the romantic is a category sometimes likely to happen in reality, particularly in a society interested in romance.[38] Life's imitation of art may well shape real events.

Hauser's romance takes the traditional form of the narrative of the abandoned royal child. This idea returns the subject of the abandoned child to its mythic origin in the Oedipus or Romulus stories. In Hauser's case this plot is described in what has been termed "The Baden Thesis". This thesis, a favourite of those who believe in Hauser's authenticity, argues that Hauser was in fact the legitimate heir of the throne of Baden, which in the 1820's and 1830's still an independent kingdom. It is argued that rival claimants to the throne kidnapped Hauser while he was only a few days old, and replaced him with a dead or dying male infant. Hauser was then kept for many years in complete isolation, and in complete ignorance of his

rights, brought up, as is usually the case in such stories, by a humble peasant. This carried on until the time when it was thought expedient to get rid of him, by releasing him once more into the world, where he was expected to make some kind of career as a soldier. Unfortunately this plot stumbled when, instead of quietly entering a military life, Hauser became instead a celebrity and an object of interest across Europe. This turn of events forced his previous captors to kill Hauser, lest his very visible existence should lead to the discovery of their plot.[39]

This plot, essentially one of romance, is explicitly presented in Evans' text, but receives a more curious expression in Feuerbach's work. In Feuerbach's text, the romance plot acts as a palimpsest, a mode of understanding present beneath the surface of the text. The mode in which the narrative begins is consistent with this procedure:

> Whitmonday is at Nuremberg a day of great festivity; when most of its inhabitants sally forth from the city, and disperse themsleves in the neighbouring country and villages. The appearance of the city, which, in consequence of the present scantiness of its population, is very straggling, reminds us on such occasions, and particularly in fine spring weather, rather of an enchanted city in the desert, than of an active, bustling, manufacturing town; and many secret deeds may, in situations remote from its centre, then be done publicly, without ceasing to be secret (Feuerbach, 1832b: 11).[40]

Here Feuerbach casts a fairy-tale gleam over the quotidian world of a German city. The physical reality of the city dissolves through the comparison with a mirage seen in a desert ("Sahara" in the original German). Moreover, the ordinary place becomes a repository for the secret and hidden. Within the frame of a modern industrial environment are to be found archaic and all but medieval traits. Of course, Hauser (as invariably happens with "feral children") is becoming identified with those very archaic properties - in this case a lost age

that is not just "savage" or primitive, but also involved with the image of a lost and "romantic" past, a Germany of Gothic strangeness.[41] Feuerbach employs this idea of a hidden and half-civilised Germany elsewhere in his text:

> There still exist certain regions in Germany, to which, if a second Dupin were to furnish maps depicting the illumination of the human mind in different countries, he would give a colouring of dark gray, where occurences similar to those which Hauser has related, are by no means unheard of. Dr Horn for instance, saw in the infirmary at Salzburg, but a few years ago, a girl of twenty-two years of age and by no means ugly, who had been brought up in a hog-stye among the hogs, and who had sat there for many years with her legs crossed. One of her legs was quite crooked, she grunted like a hog, and her gestures were brutishly unseemly in a human dress (Feuerbach, 1832b: 64-5).[42]

Hauser's story therefore belongs to the idea of a lost past that remains within the conditions of the present. Similarly, romance itself is seen as an old-fashioned and archaic form of narrative - as Ben Jonson described Shakespeare's late plays as "mouldy tales". For Jonson, as in Hauser's times, the use of the old-fashioned can carry implicit political meanings.

In veiw of this tendency towards describing the romantic as a hidden aspect of the present, it is suitable that Feuerbach's main method of introducing the romance narrative into his story is through the indirect means of allusion. This seems to have been a favourite narrative technique of Feuerbach's. In his *Narratives of Remarkable Criminal Trials*, he twice presents a narrative of a case through the medium of an underlying allusion.[43] There are three such hints in Feuerbach's narrative. In each case the allusion is to Calderón's romance, *La Vida es Sueño*. Other than the epigraph to the work, which quotes the opening lines of the play, there are two concealed references in the text itself.[44] Calderón had been rediscovered by the previous generation of writers: an edition of Calderón's plays had been

published in German in 1809. He was noticeably important for P.B. Shelley, Goethe, and A.W. Schlegel. The reference to *La Vida es Sueño* is one that Feuerbach could expect his audience to follow.

In this play, Prince Sigismund of Poland is imprisoned in a tower by his father, and left in absolute isolation, as his father has heard a prophecy that his son will become a terrible and murderous tyrant. Sigismund is temporarily released, and is allowed to become king for a day. However, during the course of the day it seems as if the prophecy is to be fulfilled as Sigismund kills a servant in a fit of blind rage. He is returned to his tower, where, on awaking, he is told that he dreamt yesterday's adventures. He experiences guilt for what he has done to the servant, while nonetheless believing that the murder was in fact simply a dream. He comes to the conclusion that even in dreams one must act with moral responsibility. The Polish people hearing that Sigismund has been locked away, rebel and place him on the throne. Sigismund now has his father and his captors in his power, but refrains from exacting revenge, due to the humanising influence of his still firmly held belief that everything that happens to him is a dream. When Calderón later rewrote the play as an *auto sacramental*, he turned it into a drama of human redemption (Parker, 1988: 197). It is possible to read Sigismund's entry into the world as a fable about the fact that it is impossible to live without causing damage and suffering to others. This might cause us to wonder if Hauser's story is not that of someone who refuses to acknowledge this fact. The play also recreates Hauser's story as one concerned with a youth that is faced with the choice of whether or not to forgive sins committed against them by the old. Sigismund's myth is that of the fear of the son - the father who rejects his eventual usurpation by attempting to destroy

his own child. Hauser's myth is of a world without father or mother, in which the child lives absented from both their hostility and their love. Hauser's story enacts an orphan in search of a father: it is suggestive that those father figures he does find either let him go (Daumer), die (Feuerbach), turn against him (Stanhope), or directly try to kill him (the two murder attempts by the mysterious stranger).

The first reference to Calderón's play occurs in a context where Feuerbach intends to depict Hauser's disadvantages in being isolated from the world (Feuerbach, 1832a: 51/1832b: 65-6). It is in the second reference that Feuerbach alludes to his private beliefs concerning Hauser's origins. He describes how he hopes that those who damaged Hauser might be brought to justice:

> But not all heights, depths, and distances, are accessible to the reach of civil justice. And, in respect to many places in which justice might have reason to seek the giant perpetrator of such a crime, it would be necessary, in order to penetrate into them, to be in possession of Joshua's ram's horns, or at least of Oberon's horn, in order, for some time at least, to suspend the action of the powerful enchanted Colossuses that guard the golden gates of certain castles. But what is veiled in blackest shades of night,
> Must, when the morning dawns, be brought to light (Feuerbach, 1832b: 162-3).[45]

Such circumspection was by no means merely a literary game in Metternich's Europe: so it is that Feuerbach's belief about Hauser's origins are all but concealed in a quotation itself about concealment. It is not until Evans' text that the full romance implications of Hauser's story could be written out clearly. Unfortunately, although Evans describes a narrative which in itself corresponds to the conditons of romance, it was undoubtedly Feuerbach who was best aware of the meanings inherent in the romance narrative, which for legal and political reasons he was unable to write.

What the implications of the romance plot for Hauser's story are, can be best seen through a brief analysis of a romance text published eleven years before Hauser's arrival in Nuremberg, that is Coleridge's *Zapolya*. This play, first performed in 1817, and printed in Coleridge's collected poems (London: 1828) is loosely based on Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*. Coleridge's remarks upon this particular Shakespearean play are uncharacteristically unhelpful. He tended to concentrate on the play's treatment of jealousy, and has little directly to say concerning the formal nature of romance. From mentions in his letters, we know that Coleridge originally thought of the play as a "Tragedy" (Coleridge, 1971, 6: 1037). Six months later, he is calling the play a "tragic Romance on the plan of the Winter's Tale" (Coleridge, 1956, 4: 628). Most significantly, Coleridge from the first connected the plot of the play with production at Christmas: the play's subtitle was "A Christmas Tale".

The plot of *Zapolya* is simple. The queen, Zapolya, is usurped by Emerick. Twenty years later, the queen is restored to power, partly through the intervention of her lost son, Bethlen, who was abandoned at birth and has grown up (like Perdita in *The Winter's Tale*) in the care of a peasant, Bathory, the old mountaineer. The placing of the play as a "Christmas tale" both suggests that this is to be considered as a light kind of entertainment, and not to be strictly judged by dramatic rules, and that the plot may carry Christian overtones. The Christian implications of the romance plot, obviously present in Medieval and early modern versions of this romance plot, are here brought again to the surface of the text. The chief implication is that the prototype of all high-born kings disguised as, or growing up as, peasants is Jesus in the manger. This refers us back to the use of the abandoned and feral child as an element in foundation myths. Here Bethlen's return to power and to knowledge

of his own kingship (and the royalty of his mother) is seen as a renewal of the political contract that founds the state. The political meaning of the abandoned child is that of a return to origins, much as later in the century this return will be seen in evolutionary terms. The child returns to the pre-political state that instituted the political realm, and to a condition of liberty and simple fellowship formulated as existing most fully in the peasant class. That Bethlen becomes a mountaineer indicates this: mountains were proverbially seen as originary sites of democracy and political freedom. The play, for all its suggestions of a validation of revolution in fact appears to enact a Burkean politics of succession and inheritance. The play recasts revolution as usurpation, breaking the "natural" succession of birth and position carried in the monarchical idea.

As well as political ideas (at this time Coleridge was also engaged in writing his *Lay Sermons*), there are implicit theological meanings in the play. The play endorses and works through the formal aspects of the nativity story, showing the high present in the humble, enacting a kingliness contained in the pastoral. That the high should be low and that the first should be last are ideas central to the romance of the abandoned child. The association of this kind of romance with these kinds of spiritual meaning is already present in the Shakespearean drama that Coleridge was drawing on. The plot of *Cymbeline* (in many ways closer to *Zapolya* than *The Winter's Tale*) is partly drawn from Spenser's list of the kings of Britain in *The Faerie Queene*, where Spenser specifically notes the conjunction of Cymbeline's reign with the birth of Christ.

That Hauser's story has several points of reference to this narrative is obvious. Firstly, there is the question of the identification of the abandoned child with Christ.[46] This

occurs in those scenes in which Hauser, feeling sympathetic pain with the images on crucifixes, pleads for the suffering man to be taken down. More extravagantly, Evans' depiction of Hauser's death-bed scene implicitly urges an identification of Hauser with Christ. This identification is both sentimental and intrinsically connected to her chief unspoken proposition, this being that Hauser is an individual without sin. Her particular insistence on Hauser's sexual innocence belongs with this idea. This presentation of Hauser as a suffering Christ, an individual of intrinsic goodness and persecuted virtue, is especially of interest when we consider that at numerous moments in her text (as in Feuerbach's) Evans expresses an antagonism to Christianity - an antagonism which Hauser himself is depicted as sharing.[47] It should be remembered that in the same year as her work on Hauser was printed, Evans published a "free-thinking" work on the errors of Christianity. It may be that Evans' hostility to Christianity while remaining sentimentally attached to Christian morality created a need for a Hauser figure: a "natural man" who displays an integral human goodness. Hauser's "unpoilt" life also implicitly proves such goodness to be essential to humankind. Of course, this ultimately derives from Rousseau. The image of goodness acquires pathos through being victimised, and in this way the figure rapidly assumes the function of a traditional "Man of Sorrows".

A comparison with Coleridge's play draws out the implicit political structure of Hauser's story. It is clear that the Hauser narrative forms part of anti-monarchical dissent, and needs to be placed in the context of peasant and middle-class grievances in the German states of the 1820's and 1830's. In an article on the survival of Hauser as a cultural figure, A.F. Bance argues that the public in the German states was then especially disaffected: "They

were only too ready to see Divine Right discredited and sovereignty reduced to dynastic gangsterism" (Bance, 1975: 200-1). Bance goes on to asssert:

> Moreover, in a prosaic age when private initiative was stifled, the occasion for a flight of fancy was welcome: a number of pretenders to European thrones gained popular credence at this time, including Naundorff, the Spandau clockmaker, whose claim to be the true Dauphin of France was supported by many (Bance, 1975: 201).

This carries weight, but it is difficult to read precisely the political background to the representation of Hauser. The radicalism in the story is probably of a symbolic and rather limited kind. It is possible that dissatisfaction with royalty may in fact mean dissatisfaction with the existence of petty kingdoms and positive desire for a German nation. This is another way in which the romance plot may be essentially nationalistic.

Baden was in fact one of the most liberal regimes among the German states of that period:

> In Baden, a state more open to western liberal influence through its proximity to Switzerland and France, an exceptionally progressive franchise produced a virile liberalism, the most advanced in Restoration Germany (Carr, 1991: 13-14).

This liberalism was tempered by the imposition of repressive measures across the German states in the period from 1819-1821. However, the southern states wre noticeably recalcitrant at imposing these measures. Eda Sagarra argues that a paternalistic relationship to the monarchies flourished. The monarch was seen as familiar and accessible, and was often well-liked and respected (1980: 17-18). In a period characterised by a move from rule by personalities to rule by the state (and monied interests) southern Germany was distinguished by the relative slowness of this transition:

> Particularly in south Germany, which did not modernise as rapidly as the north, and when society was felt to be more socially homogeneous, loyalty to the dynasties remained strong. Such loyalty was thought of in terms of pesonal affection and even a degree of familiarity - thus the kings of Bavaria and the emporers of Austria, with few exceptions, spoke with a pronounced local accent, and this habit was contrasted by south Germans and members of the small central German states with the abstract state patriotism felt to be typical of Prussia. And yet paradoxically it was in the few south German states, which, unlike Prussia in the first half of the century, had constitutions, that the person of the monarch was expressly declared "sacred and inviolable" (Sagarra, 1980: 21).

The proximity of the monarch perhaps aided Freudian identifications with him as a surrogate father: this might help to explain some of the strange investments present in the early Hauser texts. Further, on a political level it appears that it was the regressive nature of the southern régimes, their reluctance to modernise into centralised bureaucratic states, that enabled their relative liberalism.

However, radicalism traditionally flourishes in more liberal régimes. Following the shock-waves produced by the July Revolution of 1830, a revival of liberalism spread across Germany, being particularly concentrated in Baden and the Palatinate. 1831-3 was a time of great social unrest, based on a dislike of new industrial conditions by the artisans of the old handicraft systems. This wave of democratic feeling culminated in The Hambach Festival of May 1832, at which twenty-five thousand people attended. The speakers called for a *Rechtsstaat*, a German republic based on popular sovereignty. Alarmed at this radical appeal, the German princes responded by passing a series of repressive measures, "The Six Articles", in June 1832. These forbade political association and popular meetings, and condemned revolutionary agitation in the press.

All this gives a convincing if confusing background to the Hauser affair. It is difficult

to relate some of the political background to the immediate circumstances of the case. The political radicalism of the Hansbach festival went off the boil in 1833, due to a good harvest and reductions in taxes. The popular unrest about economic conditions is unlikely to have much affected the bourgeois and aristocratic authors of the Hauser texts. However, the political agitation was almost wholly bourgeois in origin, and was about fundamental liberties and the desire for a constitution. Could a peasant-monarch have any real political meaning for such people, or really stand as an effective symbol of such desires? The bourgeoisie had little interest in the peasant classes: they simply wanted an expansion of the franchise to include respectable members of their own class.

Nonetheless, the bourgeois political radicalism of the period would appear to receive tacit expression in the romance elements of the story. The nationalistic basis of the romance plot can be seen to derive directly from the nationalistic flavour of democratic feeling in Germany at this time. Yet it is vital to make distinctions in the radicalisms offered by the Kasparite authors. For all her pleasure in claiming the King of France as one of her ancestors, Evans is clearly a republican with some sentimental attachment to the idea of monarchy, but chiefly sees the Dukes and Princes of old Europe as a Machiavellian set of scoundrels and killers. Feuerbach's political position in relation to the Hauser plot may be more complicated, in view of the political atmosphere present in the south of Germany at this time. The Kasparite texts are marked by a strong ambivalence towards historical change. The discontents concerning the monarchy were tempered, as we have seen, by a sense of deep personal affection and identification towards particular monarchs. It is possible therefore that the radical agitation implicitly present in the Kasparite texts is not provoked by republican or

modern democratic sympathies, but by a belief in the institution of monarchy itself. There is a sense that kings should be good and rule decently, and a concomitant sense that the monarchy is in any case losing power and prestige in the face of a process of state centralisation and modernisation. The criticisms of the monarchy that begin to appear in the 1830's and 1840's tend to concentrate on the "personal silliness or inadequacy of individual rulers" (Sagarra, 1980: 22). Yet this need not obviously imply an attack on the institution itself; rather it embodies a sense that it wished the institution were stronger. The king, for all his silliness, at least remains an individual with whom the subject could feel an affinity, as opposed to the impersonal and abstract loyalties of beaurocratic rule. The radical reading of the Hauser affair therefore becomes more ambivalent. Its radical potential merges with a reactionary conservatism. This is precisely the kind of thing that one would expect to find contained within the romance form. That Hauser's story also acts partly as a critique of the monarchical largely depends on a formal consideration which we shall return to later: while Hauser's story begins as romance, it ends as tragedy.

Kaspar Hauser acquires prestige through his connections with the royal family. However, as his royalty is stripped from him, Hauser is ultimately placed in antagonism to the monarchical. He becomes a symbol not of the divine right of kings, but of "the wretched of the earth".[48] If Hauser was just a peasant on the make (and pauperism was a wide-scale social problem in the German states of the period) this would still hold true. In this way, he assumes the position of one who can be used for attacks upon the monarchy. This is in despite of the fact that he continues to be the rightful ruler (according to the Baden Thesis). Hauser's legitimacy can therefore itself express the right of the oppressed and victimised to rule. Here

we might take a hint from Walter Benjamin's reading of *La Vida es Sueño* in *The Origins of German Tragic Drama*. Benjamin declares that in Calderón's plays the king exemplifies the state of nature, since the origin of kingship exists in the state of creation. The ruler therefore contains the creaturely and the bestial. This might refer us back to some of the political meanings in the representation of Peter the Wild Boy. Again, an implication exists that places the feral or abandoned child in the position of kingship.

The romance plot in Hauser's narratives is hidden and subtle, and works in counterpoint with another kind of narrative, whose structures are implicitly opposed to the magical and numinous qualities of romance. The surface form is one closely allied to the condition of biography and the novel of development. In concluding my interpretation of the representation of Hauser I will argue that the relation between a narrative of development and a romance narrative is central to elucidating Hauser's position. In early nineteenth century Germany, the narrative of development inevitably drew upon an image of the self found in the form of the *bildungsroman*. This novelistic form derives philosophical support from a Hegelian comprehension of the self as revealed within the process of its own history. Both narratives of individual development enact an entelechy of the self expressed both in biographical modes of selfcomprehension and in the time system of the European novel. These biographical modes re-enact development as an orderly process moving through more or less well-defined stages of infancy, childhood, adolescence, and the entry into adulthood. It is generally an imagined fixed position in society, associated with adulthood, that becomes the terminal destination of such narratives.[49]

I would argue that Hauser is specifically exempt from the possibilities of such a

narrative. For this reason, among others, Feuerbach and Evans employ an alternative narrative of the self based upon romance. The romance form is especially apt considering the tradition of literature concerning abandoned children found in Greek and Roman novels, Medieval romances, and early modern tragicomedies. The readiness to hand of such a plot imbues the representation of Hauser with a richness that is deliberately, even defiantly, archaic.

Hauser's body is one place in which the contrast between the romance and developmental plots can be most clearly distinguished. The body of the abandoned child exsists as a visible sign of its own history, as a token of authenticity in the romance plot, or as the visible sign of inward growth in the plot of development. For instance, Stanhope depicts Feuerbach's chief proof as the very existence of Hauser's body:

> His theory, which appears from the facts above stated to entirely groundless and void of reality, is explained by Feuerbach. He says "the truth of the narrative is certified to us by the personal qualities of the relator, in whose body, mind, and disposition the act is still written in legible characters." He considers also (in a note to page 41) as a proof that "is entirely confirmed by the traces which remain in his body and which must be recognized," that he "always sat, whether waking or sleeping, in an upright posture" (Stanhope, 1836: 59).

Stanhope then proceeds to attack these bodily proofs as irrelevant or bogus. He cites the absence of any unusual configuration of the knee, his healthy countenance, his lack of sensitivity to strong daylight, his perfect proportion and strength, and the meaninglessness of the fact that in his post-mortem he was revealed as having an enlarged liver (Stanhope, 1836:59-62). Stanhope distorts Feuerbach's argument here, but a few pages later, he goes on to state it quite clearly (Stanhope, 1836:62-3, and 77-8). Although Feuerbach depicts

Hauser's body as accurately representing his supposed history, it is the condition of Hauser's "soul" that remains the absolute and clinching proof of Hauser's authenticity. For Feuerbach this "soul" is the external manifestation in action and disposition of Hauser's hidden and internal life:

> Even of the history of this deed, we have as yet no other knowledge, than that which we have received from the narration given of it by him to whom it was done: yet, the truth of this narration is warranted by the personality of the narrator himself; upon whose thinking and sentient mind (Geist und gemüth) - as we shall see more particularly hereafter - the deed itself, is written in visible characters. No other being than one who has experienced and suffered what Caspar has, can be what Caspar is; and he whose being indicates what Caspar's does, must have lived in a state such as that in which Caspar says that he lived (Feuerbach, 1832b: 77-8).[50]

Hauser's story depends upon the relation between the soul and the body, or the inner and surface life. It is in the split or disjunction between these states that Hauser exists - his "soul" being not simply the aborted and innocent product of the treatment of his body, but also the guarantee of his status as a person. However, this move from the surface to the inner world which metaphysically ratifies its existence only allows another area of doubt to be created. The existence of the hidden implies the possibility of dissembling - that the revelation of the "soul" in action becomes unstable through hypocrisy.

This is another way of saying that one obvious context for the representation of Hauser is the history of imposture, particularly its connections to "Romanticism". This history would include the case of Psalmanazar, an early eighteenth-century impersonator of a "savage", and the (already mentioned) case of Caraboo. Central to both of these cases is the representation of the self as exotic other. This re-creation of identity through deceit is apparently central to the understanding of Hauser. It may be the idea of Hauser's imposture

that most looks forward to cultural "modernity". Particularly curious is the way in which imposture begins to ally itself with the image of celebrity. Besides these intimations of cultural change, it is important to remember that the "Kasparites" rely upon forms of narrative that are fundamentally, indeed defiantly, old-fashioned - though, of course, this desire for the past is itself a sign of the modern, particularly in those aspects of it which hint at a tribal nationalism. The difficulty that we cannot actually know if Hauser was an imposter or not is of course not such a problem as might be supposed. Just as the belief that Hauser was a "child of nature" reveals fundamental preconceptions about the representation of the individual as "feral child", so the belief in imposture is similarly invested with abiding images of the self. What the theme of imposture brings out is the necessity for the "Kasparites" to provide a narrative of authentication.

Although Feuerbach presents Hauser as something akin to a sign of the soul made visible, Hauser himself (as we have already seen) is a person whose idea of truth can only be established in the world of the senses. Again, Hauser himself acts as a destabilising influence within the text, suggesting a flaw in Feuerbach's own argument for his authenticity by denying the existence of an invisible guarantee: Hauser's world, like his person, remains constrained around the physical and the bodily. This realm of the senses is itself confused: Hauser's perceptions of the world being untaught. In this way, Feuerbach repeats Cheselden's experiment on the blind man with Hauser (mentioned already in connection with Peter the Wild Boy), and gains similar results. Likewise, Hauser is at first unable to distinguish between the represented and the real. As has been said above, one result of these confusions is to make the common sense perception of the world appear conventional, and hence not

privileged by an objective "truth". The truth which Hauser relies upon through his senses, becomes for us an artifice. This doubt forces us back upon the inward, which has been similarly discredited by its dubious relation to the external. Yet Hauser's person refutes those who doubt his story: as we have seen earlier, Caspar's truth lies in himself, but not, for Feuerbach, in his body but in his inwardness revealed in his body - an inwardness which can also be equated with his narrative.[51]

Hauser's post-mortem operates in this way as a parody of this divide between the inner and the outer. This is particularly the case in Evans' text, where the moment of the post-mortem acts as a device to place Hauser within a developmental narrative tied to the discourses of evolution:

> The brain was only slightly developed, but not diseased. It resembled the brain of a marten, and its condition showed that its activity had been arrested at an early period of life ... When restored to society he was a man in years and in outward development; but his brain had remained in its primitive stage of growth, and could not enlarge after so long a period of inactivity. Kaspar Hauser's peculiar character was thus accounted for. He was silly, vain, and untruthful, because he had only a child's judgement to guide his conduct; he was gentle, affectionate, and pure, because his stronger passions had never been awakened. More was expected of him than his fellows had a right to demand; he neither understood himself nor was comprehended by others; he was a being apart, and could never find his place in the world from which he had been so long excluded (Evans, 1892: 113-4).

Evans explains Hauser through a implied narrative of recapitulation, therefore linking her text with movements in the psychology and anthropology of the period.[52] The narrative of recapitulation is immanent in non-fictional accounts of feral children almost from the start. The linking of the child and the savage with the primitive state of humankind places both in an origin which is easy to depict as a state of arrest or of inception, the point from which both

biography and history begins. Late nineteenth century recapitulatory theory adds to this image the supposed facts of evolution and embryology, in which the individual foetus (and, later, the individual child and adolescent too) is seen as recapitulating the primitive stages of human development. Evans' image of Hauser is clearly situated within this discourse: his brain is both bestial and embryonic. What alienates Hauser from the world therefore becomes not a matter of the condition of the world but of biology: it is the effects on Hauser's physiology which constrain him as a "being apart". The biological arrest which he undergoes further identifies him as a child, and moreover a child who is doomed never to grow up.

Evans' use of evolutionary theory further exemplifies the tendency to attempt to erase the radical doubt that Hauser invokes. The post mortem - for all its suggestions of late Victorian gothic - provides objective and, above all, internal evidence of Hauser's intrinsic otherness. However, that otherness is discovered in order to be palliated through an appeal to "scientific" fact. This allievates the anxiety produced by uncertainty.

In other instances, the displacement witnessed in Hauser is solidified and stabilised not in the essential sphere of biology, but through the uses of narrative. Feuerbach notes that the early discussions of Hauser, including the first official publication related to him, are marked by the desire of those confronted with Hauser to make a story of him, filling out Hauser's blanks with their own conjectures and guesses (Feuerbach, 1832a: 40-1; 1832b: 54-5). The subject of Hauser's story is therefore invariably that of doubt: in claiming uniqueness for Hauser these narratives lay themselves open to the doubt of imposture. Of course, this is a doubt which can never be satisfactorily settled, seeing that it involves not merely the discovery of certain facts which might verify or falsify his story, but also Hauser's integrity.

His identity is subsumed within the narrative which is created around him, so that the person, Kaspar Hauser, cannot be said to have an identity outside of that narrative. This allows for the fact that this narrative itself retains the doubt which it stands against.

That in Hauser's case we cannot have truth but only narratives necessarily places stress upon the nature of the narrative employed to replace that truth. The developmental narrative whose structure determines Hauser's identity does so despite the fact that Hauser himelf is a person without a development. That Hauser is a human being who lacks a history is a fact which remains the case whether we believe his story or not. In either case, Hauser's childhood and youth take place out of the sight of others. It is this separation which casts Hauser into the realm of doubt: it is only through the verification of other eyes that we can be said to exist. That which is hidden may have value, but in human terms its value is necessarily indeterminate and insubstantial until it is revealed in the world of appearances. However, the nature of an individual's history is such that for Hauser this inwardness, this obscured life, can only be revealed after the fact in terms of a narrated biography. The life in time of the European subject, however, only exists through its verification in society. Hauser, whose isolated existence was such as to forego this verification, therefore requires not just the historical record of development, but the magical confirmation of romance. In this way, Feuerbach's recourse to romance, and Stanhope's denial of it, are enmeshed within the desire to prove or disprove the authenticity of this person.

It is this which best explains Feuerbach's use of the term "soul murder". If the soul is considered as the immanent essential self revealed phenomenologically through the process of its own history, then Hauser, who has been denied such a history, finds himself without

such a soul. The instability of Hauser's self, characterised by its perpetual threatening by dissolution into anxiety or exposure, therefore finds stability in a narrative which can offer an alternative history in time.

The developmental plot acts in consort with, and in antagonism to, the romance elements of the story. Where the *bildungsroman* elements suggest flow, continuity, and progression, the romance plot signals arrest, involution, and disruption. These romance elements are signalled only in asides or implications, but they work against the acting out of a narrative whose logic is that of linear growth. The disruption of such order is even signalled in the mocking joke carried in the fact that one of the religious pamphlets Hauser has stuffed into his pockets when he is frist cast out into the world deals with the subject of "The art of regaining lost time and years misspent" (Feuerbach, 1832a: 12; 1832b: 22).

Hauser's self was lost in the obscurity of his childhood. His history is a condition which he has slept through, with no consciousness of the condition even of being asleep (see Feuerbach, 1832a: 49-50; 1832b: 63-4). The crime committed against him robs him of the human development necessary to create the sense of self:

> Having commenced the life of infancy at the age of physical maturity, he will, throughout all his life, remain, as regards his mind, less forward than his age, and as regards his age, more forward than his mind. Mental and physical life, which in the regular course of their natural development go hand in hand, therefore, in respect to Caspar, been as it were separated, and placed in an unnatural opposition with each other. Because he *slept* through his childhood, that childhood could not be *lived* through by him at its proper time; it therefore still remains to be lived through by him; and, it consequently follows him into his later years, not as a smiling genius, but as an affrighting spectre, which is constantly intruding upon him at an unseasonable hour (Feuerbach, 1832b: 75-6).[53]

Yet this self may be found again in a narrative which could bring the adult back into contact

with the lost childhood. It seems Feuerbach instinctively grasped that the form of Shakespearean romance that Coleridge had employed in *Zapolya* was the formal means by which to achieve this aim. Moreover, this projected union of the self at the moment of discovery/recognition also offers a way in which the body and the mind may come again into conjunction, having been split apart by the disjunction in Hauser's history. This unification of the inner and the outer proscribes childhood as the temporal manifestation of the inner world (an idea which looks forward to Freud). Hauser's unnatural conjunction of childhood and age might be reconciled through an anagnorisis which remedies his disrupted history.

The romance motifs in Hauser's story therefore suggest the possibility of the assumption of an integral and sincere identity, created in an instant, and through a magical reordering of the facts of the individual's history. The discovery of identity as in the recognitions of an old romance promises to heal the perversion of Hauser's development. This may again ally Hauser's story to the narratives of Shakespeare's last plays, where a belief in "magic" refutes radical scepticism. There this belief in wonders also includes a belief in the presence of the body in art. As in Hauser's case Shakespeare begins these plays with an expression of disbelief in the integrity of the other. This causes a breakdown in perception of the world, a breakdown healed through the conditions of romance. The potentially tragic elements of *Cymbeline* or *The Winter's Tale* are thereby avoided.

Yet in Hauser's case this hinted transcendance never arrives: he remains in his state of disorder perpetually:

> ... it is equally certain, that the heterogeneous influence of mingled masses of individuals to which he was thus constantly exposed, was by no means well adapted to promote an orderly development of this neglected youth, in

> agreement with the regular course of nature ... it was impossible for the materials thus collected to assume the form and figure even of the most inconsiderable organic whole. All was mingled together in one, disorderly, scattered, and parti-colored mass, of hundreds and thousands of partial representations and fragements of thought, huddled together, above and below, and by the sides of each other, without apparent connexion or design (Feuerbach, 1832b: 105-6).[54]

Hauser's initiation into social life matches and intensifies the disruption of development already witnessed in his isolated childhood. Yet the condition of disorder and doubt engendered in that murdered childhood are in this case unreconcilable. The position of the abandoned child is inherently tragic in potential. They are persons without a place in the world, with no knowledge of themselves or of their relation to the world in which they live. Hauser falls into a knowledge of his placelessness, his otherness, but never acheives the epiphany of recognition that might salve that knowledge. Hauser's story is a romance plot in which the moment of "recognition" is perpetually deferred. The reconciliation of past and present which would draw Hauser into the social domain as a person with a history simply never occurs.

In a coda to this chapter, I shall go on to explore further the meanings of this type of romance narrative, through an interpretation of Edgar Rice Burroughs' *Tarzan of the Apes* (New York: 1914). This later work in many ways repeats the basic formal structure of the Hauser story, while adding one new, and increasingly important, element: that is, the concept of race.

Part Five - The Child In The Jungle: Tarzan and Racial Romance

Edgar Rice Burroughs was reluctant to pinpoint specific sources for his novel *Tarzan of the Apes* (1914), mainly because he was plagued throughout his career by accusations of plagiarism. He was particularly pained by comparisons between his story and that of Kipling's *The Jungle Books*. Kipling himself clearly believed that Burroughs' Tarzan derived from his own Mowgli:

> And, if it be in your power, bear serenely with imitators. My *Jungle Books* begat Zoos of them. But the genius of all the genii was one who wrote a series called *Tarzan of the Apes*. I read it, but regret it I never saw it on the films, where it rages most successfully. He had "jazzed" the motif of the *Jungle Books* and, I imagine, had thoroughly enjoyed himself. He was reported to have said that he wanted to find out how bad a book he could write and "get away with", which is a legitimate ambition (Kipling, 1977: 162).

Unsurprisingly, Burroughs does not seem to have relished such praise, or, indeed, any sort of comparison with *The Jungle Books*. Any confession of indebtedness on Burroughs' part was always stated equivocally - as in this letter to Professor Altrocchi, of 31 March, 1937, where Burroughs seeks to explain the origin of his story:

> ... I believe that it may have originated in my interest in Mythology and the story of Romulus and Remus. I also recall having read many years ago the story of a sailor who was shipwrecked on the Coast of Africa and who was adopted by and consorted with great apes to such an extent that when he was rescued a she-ape followed him into the surf and threw a baby after him. Then, of course, I read Kipling; so that it probably was a combination of all these that suggested the Tarzan idea to me. The fundamental idea is, of course, much older than Mowgli, or the story of the sailor; and probably antedates even Romulus and Remus; so that after all there is nothing new or remarkable about it (Lupoff, 1965: 195).

Here Burroughs both confesses his debt to Kipling, and reduces it with his account of the "story of the sailor", with its strong implications of bestiality. (A bestiality which Marianna Torgovnick argues masks still deeper fears of miscegenation). The acknowledgement of Kipling as source was perhaps enabled by the older writer"s recent death, which might have ended any acute sense of rivalry on Burroughs' part. Of course, Kipling's importance is further reduced by Burroughs' tracing the ultimate source to mythology - which may be taken here, as elsewhere in the period, as a means of placing a story within a generalised concept of humanity as such.

The source of the story in European myth points to an involvement within the narrative concerning the notion of racial and human identity. As is generally the case in texts of the early twentieth century, the discussion of "savagery" and childhood resolves itself into a manifestation of ideologies of absolute racial and human difference. The demise of the nation state in favour of internationalism based on class or racial lines is fully expressed in *Tarzan of the Apes*. (See Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Chapters 1 and 2). Burroughs' narrative explores the borderlines between races, as between the human and the simian, not in order to subvert or transgress them, but rather as a means of acting out their defined and permanent lines of demarcation. Although *Tarzan of the Apes* plays upon the nature of transgression, and even allows its readers the vicarious pleasure of witnessing broken taboos, its model of such transgression is fully Foucauldian: the transgression happens in order to strengthen and continually renew the boundary.

Burroughs offers a précis of his tale:

> The story I am on now is of the scion of a noble English house - of the present time - who was born in tropical Africa where his parents died when he was about a year old. The infant was found and adopted by a huge she-ape, and was brought up among a band of fierce anthropoids.
> The mental development of this ape-man in spite of every handicap, of how he learned to read English without knowledge of the spoken language, of the way in which his inherent reasoning faculties lifted him high above his savage jungle friends and enemies, of his meeting with a white girl, how he came at last to civilisation and to his own makes most fascinating writing and I think will prove interesting reading, as I seem especially adapted to the building of the "damphool" species of narrative (Porges, 1975: 123-124).

Burroughs' self-deprecation is not unjustified. A slightly more enthusiastic account of the story appeared in the September issue of *All-Story* advertising *Tarzan's* appearance in the following month's issue:

> If you will stop and realise how many thousands of stories an editor has to read, day in, day out, you will be impressed when we tell you that we read this yarn at one sitting and had the time of our young lives. It is the most exciting story we have seen in a blue moon, and about as original as they make 'em. Through a series of catastrophes an English baby boy is kidnapped by a tribe of huge anthropoid apes. He grows up among them. The fact that he is a reasoning animal makes a difference in his development, and then the forces of civilisation obtrude. Zowie! but things happen! (Porges, 1975: 136)

Burroughs' account of his own work, with its "anthropoids" and contrast of heredity and environment, reveals the influence of evolution and of racial theories. In January 1899, Burroughs had bought Darwin's *The Descent of Man*. He sketched a crouching ape on the flyleaf: to the right of the drawing, he wrote "Grandpa". From its inception *Tarzan of the Apes* was obviously a post-Darwinian tale. The story is obviously one of "the struggle for existence". Tarzan fights continuously to survive, to remain the strongest in the jungle. Tarzan's advantage over the other animals is purely evolutionary:

> No longer did he feel shame for his hairless body or his human features, for

> now his reason told him that he was of a different race from his wild and hairy companions. He was a M-A-N, they were A-P-E-S, and the little apes which scurried through the forest top were M-0-N-K-E-Y-S [...] And so he learned to read (Burroughs, 1914: 83).

It is his possession of human reason that enables Tarzan to educate himself and raise himself above the level of the animals, and indeed above that of the native tribes:

> But there was that which raised him far above his fellows of the jungle - that little spark which spells the whole vast difference between man and brute - Reason (Burroughs, 1914: 153).

Burroughs' natural white man is neither brutish nor incurious, but innately superior. He is in himself already at a higher level than any of the animals, possessing the reason that the real feral child must painfully develop. Burroughs knew that this was in essence a comforting fiction, and speculated as to what a feral child would really be like:

> ... the more I thought about it, the more convinced I became that the resultant adult would be a most disagreeable person to have around the house. He would probably have B.O., Pink Toothbrush, Halitosis, and Athlete's Foot, plus a most abominable disposition; so I decided not to be honest, but to draw a character people would admire (Porges, 1975: 135-136).

Tarzan's evolutionary advantage is partly an expression of his ordinary humanity refined and strengthened by life in the jungle. Far from the dulled senses of real "wolf-children", Tarzan's senses are preternaturally acute, so that he is attuned to all the life of the forest, much like Hawkeye in Cooper's "Leatherstocking" novels. Yet, being white and an aristocrat, Tarzan lives at an even higher evolutionary level; he is the furthest point of civilisation honed in the evolutionary origin of the African jungle. Tarzan's jungle life is contrasted ironically with that of his civilised brother, Clayton. The aristocratic English-bred Lord appears decadent beside the jungle-fit noble savage. At one point Tarzan lets out a roar

in the jungle once he has killed Sabor, the lionness: "And in London another Lord Greystoke was speaking to *his* kind in the House of Lords, but none trembled at the sound of his soft voice" (Burroughs, 1914: 139). In the end, Tarzan's savage childhood gives him an evolutionary advantage over the delicate, public-school Lord, when in the matter of sexual selection the clean-limbed American beauty Jane Porter chooses Tarzan over his genteel brother.

Tarzan possesses the advantages of both worlds. He is at home in the jungle, but his aristocratic heredity give him a natural delicacy of feeling. Tarzan captures and kills Kulonga, a black tribesman, and is poised to eat the dead man: "How may we judge him, by what standards, this ape-man with the heart and head and body of an English gentleman, and the training of a wild beast?" (Burroughs, 1914: 119). However, decency prevails, and nature triumphs over nurture:

> Why then this hesitancy? [...] All he knew was that he could not eat the flesh of this black man, and thus hereditary instinct, ages old, usurped the functions of his untaught mind and saved him from transgressing a world-wide law of whose very existence he was ignorant (Burroughs, 1914: 119).

Not only is Tarzan naturally civilised, he is *by nature*, more civilised than the native blacks, whom we have seen only a few pages before observing no such delicacy concerning the eating of human flesh.

Often Burroughs' racism is even cruder than this. Here he describes one native tribe: "The bestial faces dubbed with colour - the huge mouths and flabby hanging lips [...] the rolling, demon eyes" (290). In *The Return of Tarzan* (London: 1915), Tarzan joins a black tribe whose members are more advanced in the evolutionary scale:

> Tarzan was again impressed by the symmetry of their figures and the regularity of their features - the flat noses and thick lips of the typical West Coast savage were entirely missing. In repose the faces of the men were intelligent and dignified, those of the women at times prepossessing (Burroughs, 1915: 202-203).

Later in this book Tarzan encounters the last vestiges of a white civilisation in the heart of the jungle. The men have degenerated, through breeding with apes, into dwarfish savages, while the women priestesses remain civilised and advanced on the evolutionary scale. The idea of a lost white race seems to have been a popular myth of the period, and, to white writers, a potent symbol of racial origins at a time of cultural anxiety and a loss of confidence within the Imperial enterprise. The lost white race appears in H. Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* (London: 1885) and, transplanted to the North West Frontier, in Kipling's "The Man Who Would Be King", where the lost race are described as being "English".

It is likely that the attraction of these lost races is that they represent an alternative England or America. Beyond the edge of the frontier the imagination inscribes a society that while being like us has been spared the process of our history. Yet these societies exist as kinds of warning, repeating in their own context a drama of rise and decay (as in the degenerate condition of the ape-men in *The Return of Tarzan*) or otherwise a primordial purity which is also a violent and unprogressing savagery. Tarzan himself exists outside the social context of such mirror-groups. His unique isolation from any kind of political or tribal entity is the chief sign of his enviable position at the meeting point of "savage" and civilization. The only political unit we can imagine him in is the condition of marriage, where as patriarchal head of the family he can reinstate Filmeresque concepts of the origin of the polis.

That Burroughs expresses racist attitudes is certain. Burroughs' racism would seem to be influenced by evolutionary theories: Porter and Mr. Philander are first seen discussing racial theories; Mr Philander comments on the skeletons of Tarzan's father and mother that they belong to "one of the higher white races" (Burroughs, 1914: 219); and the plot hinges upon the racial characteristics visible in fingerprints:

> "Do finger prints show racial characteristics?" he asked. "Could you determine, for example, solely from finger prints whether the subject was Negro or Caucasian?"
> "I think not," replied the officer, "although some claim that those of the negro are less complex."
> "Could the finger prints of an ape be detected from those of a man?"
> "Probably, because the ape's would be far simpler than those of the higher organism."
> "But a cross between an ape and a man might show the characteristics of either progenitor?" continued Tarzan (Burroughs, 1914: 364).

In other words, Burroughs is suggesting that the finger prints of the Negro are evolutionarily closer to the apes. In fact, Tarzan's story depends upon this implicit belief in a hierarchy of races, with the "civilized white races" at the top of the scale.[55]

Tarzan is instinctively drawn to the white race; he saves the French soldier, D'Arnot, specifically because he is white. Similarly, D'Arnot is relieved to see that his saviour is a white man (Burroughs, 1914: 312). It is curious and significant that Tarzan's first sexual feelings are aroused by the white Jane Porter, and not by the native girls and certainly not by the female apes. Tarzan's kinship is with humanity in general, but his sense of belonging is only satisfied by contact with his fellow whites. Tarzan, the African white man, was a figure designed to allay fears about racial hierarchy, at a time when anthropologists and archeologists were placing the "cradle of civilization" in central Africa.

Burroughs both affirms the value of civilisation and celebrates the escape from its discontents. Clayton, Tarzan's father, is the epitome of English civilisation: "the type of Englishman that one likes best to associate with the noblest monuments of historic achievement upon a thousand victorious battle fields - a strong virile man - mentally, morally, and physically" (Burroughs, 1914: 3). At the beginning of the book Clayton and his wife are left to die in the jungle. Clayton imagines their experiences now to be a repetition of man's original struggle to survive:

> "Hundreds of thousands of years ago our ancestors of the dim and distant past faced the same problems which we must face, possibly in these same primeval forests. That we are here today evidences their victory" (Burroughs, 1914: 28).

Yet Clayton and his wife cannot survive, despite his being the highest type of civilised man. Civilization is insufficient in the jungle, until, in the figure of Tarzan, it is married with savage knowledge, courage, and strength. Tarzan returns to the furthest origin, apparently discarding centuries of civilization: "Then hunger closed the gap between them, and the son of an English lord and an English lady nursed at the breast of Kala, the great ape" (Burroughs, 1914: 56). That Tarzan should be brought up by apes, and not, like Mowgli, by wolves, carries, of course, an evolutionary significance. The apes are our roots, discernibly an origin. This is especially clear as Burroughs informs us that these are not ordinary apes, but a more advanced anthropoid species, perhaps even the missing link between man and the animals (46). Tarzan descends to the origin of humanity, but carries within him, through heredity, the means to reascend the ladder of civilisation. He embodies a new kind of man, possessing the best of both worlds; a moral, decent animal, and a tough, fearless, savage gentleman. Tarzan

resembles the hero of the Western, the white tracker, the chivalrous savage. The illustration which appeared on the cover of the first publication of *Tarzan of the Apes* carries suggestions of this. Tarzan is depicted carrying a bow and arrows, and his appearance suggests not an African savage but the popular conception of the American "Indian". Just as the Western hero and the pioneers of the American boy's book take on the virtues of the wilderness, so Tarzan is the English gentleman made new, made better through immersion in the savage. We are not much interested in the ancestry of feral children such as Itard's "Victor"; for Tarzan, as for Kaspar Hauser, it is the key to our understanding of him.

This would appear to be a feature of Burroughs' writing in general. In *The Cave Girl* (Chicago: 1925), an intellectual American falls in love with and brings brings back to civilisation a primitive woman. Once they have safely returned to society, it is discovered that the cave girl is in fact an aristocrat, the daughter of a European countess. In his story "The Lad and the Lion", Burroughs describes an orphan boy who forms an alliance with a lion. The boy is given a name by his girlfriend, an Arabian princess, and after receiving a knock on the head in a battle suddenly realises that he too is a royal Prince. In this new social role he specifically rejects his identification with the animal world, by declaring that he is no longer a "dog" or a "pig" as the Arabs have insultingly named him. This links very well to Tarzan who also is a human being identified with the animal world (the "ape-man") but who also discovers that he possesses a high place in the civilized social hierarchy.

The civilisation which Tarzan escapes by accident and, later, by design, is seen throughout the first two *Tarzan* books as itself being savage. Whereas Tarzan's savage training refines and draws out his gentlemanly nature, civilisation is depicted as a veneer over

savage instincts. In *The Return of Tarzan*, Paris is specifically depicted as a jungle, and a place of intrigues and unmeaning violence. The first whites we see are the pirates, among whom the Claytons struggle to survive as Tarzan will later struggle in the jungle. Later starving, the crew of "The Arrow" are easily changed "from human beasts to wild beasts" (Burroughs, 1915: 264). The French soldier, D'Arnot is tortured by the blacks, but Burroughs tells us that they learnt their methods from the "civilised" Europeans (Burroughs, 1914: 284). (This is specifically an attack on the Belgians' imperial policies).

Tarzan's discovery of his true nature occurs through his relationship with Jane Porter. In the semi-pornographic chapter, "The Call of The Primitive", Jane is saved by Tarzan from being raped by the ape Terkoz. As she watches "the primordial ape battle with the primeval man for possession of a woman - for her":

> ... the veil of the centuries of civilisation and culture was swept from the blurred vision of the Baltimore girl [...] it was a primeval woman who sprang forward with out-stretched arms towards the primeval man who had fought for her and won her (Burroughs, 1914: 257).

Tarzan does "just what his first ancestor would have done" and kisses her (Burroughs, 1914: 258). That this first ancestor is not just some evolutionary progenitor is made clear later on: "Never, she thought had such a man strode the earth since God created the first in his own image" (Burroughs, 1914: 276). The origin they have returned to is an Eden, a place of primeval purity free from the taint of civilisation. Jane falls in love with this Adamic, primordial man; indeed when she sees the civilised Tarzan she is vaguely disappointed. In such circumstances, it is inevitable for the completion of the myth that they should both return to live in the jungle.

It is possible to see in this an American rejection of European civilization. Not only does the American girl reject society in favour of the primordial jungle, but also Tarzan rejects his inheritance as Greystoke. He denies his European heritage in favour of Africa, and embraces the new, the American girl. Together they will start again in the heart of the jungle, a jungle which is also their origin, free from the constraints of civilisation. It is revealing that only twenty or so years after the close of the American frontier, Burroughs, the American author, should be opening up new frontiers, new landscapes for the American drama, for Tarzan in the jungles of Africa, and for Carter on the planet Mars, in his Barsoom chronicles.

Burroughs uses the feral child story as a means of exploring the acquiring of identity in the passage from adolescence to maturity, employing the methods and meanings of romance to achieve this, as Feuerbach and Evans had already done with Hauser. As with Kipling's Mowgli, Tarzan's true identity is known from the start, but within the story it remains a focus of mystery:

> What did she know of this strange creature at her side? What did he know of himself? Who was he? Who, his parents? Why his very name echoed his mysterious origin and his savage life. He had no name (Burroughs, 1914: 385).

His origin cannot be traced and so it perplexes and fascinates.

In *Tarzan of the Apes*, we find tokens used as a means of guaranteeing identity, the lost child who is found and restored safely both to the family, to social position, and to the discovery of their true self. These are features of romance. Where for Itard's "Victor", language represents a fall from original freedom and his savage nature, Burroughs uses marks, prints, language as ambivalent means of discovering identity, both individual and evolutionary.

In *Tarzan of the Apes*, there is a confusion of signs, where nothing is as it appears to be. The skeleton in the cradle is mistakenly assumed to be human; Jane sees Tarzan's photograph of his parents but cannot comprehend that Tarzan is their son; none of the stranded friends link the white forest-god who looks after them with the Tarzan who leaves written messages in their cabin. Language is confused and problematic; Tarzan can write in English, but can only speak in French, and this again becomes a barrier to his recognition as Greystoke. These confused and misinterpreted signs prevent Tarzan discovering his true identity, just as they prevent Jane from realising that he loves her.

This confusion of signs is the visible counterpart of a confusion about the nature of humanity. The skeleton of a baby gorilla is taken to be that of the infant Greystoke, echoing the manner in which Tarzan's nature explores the confusion of boundaries between human beings and animals. Tarzan, the white forest-god is also Tarzan the English gentleman; the English gentleman is also the man-ape and savage. Tarzan embodies anxieties about man's status in the hierarchy of nature. Darwin had undermined man's position as steward of the animals, lord of creation. Burroughs creates in Tarzan a figure who would confront and then transcend these new limitations. Tarzan returns to the evolutionary origin and conquers the primeval world of Africa by means of his human nature. He justifies his position at the pinnacle of evolution. He is the Lord of the jungle.

Tarzan embodies an uncertainty about human nature, being both man and ape, only to reassure us in the end. Tarzan becomes a man without the benefit of society, thereby eluding the anxiety created by figures such as Peter the Wild Boy or Victor. Not only does he create humanity in himself, he also becomes the best kind of man, the gentleman savage.

Tarzan manifests all the possibilities of his nature; he is a god, a man, and an animal. His quest for his own origins parallels humanity's quest for its place in nature, a place defined here (as for Pico della Mirandola) by its mutability, its possibility of including everything.

In the end, it is Tarzan's fingerprints that prove his origins. These are unique, unmistakable signs. They stand beyond the limitations of language or other artificial representations of the self. They belong to the natural man, to an animal identity of the body, unforgeable, beyond confusion: "The answer to his life's riddle lay in those tiny marks" (Burroughs, 1914: 365). In the last pages, a telegram arrives with the message, "'Finger prints prove you Greystoke'" (400). The proof of Tarzan's social identity is inscribed on his body. Yet Tarzan renounces this social position, his identity as Greystoke.

At the time when he encounters Jane Porter, Tarzan is twenty years old. His story represents both an evolutionary search for identity (a search whose end lies in himself) and the parallel search for individual identity, the adolescent's arrival at sexual maturity. In the end, Tarzan achieves both, staying in the jungle and marrying Jane Porter.

In the final chapter we shall see how Mowgli's search for identity takes him back into society. He renounces the jungle and, by implication, the life of his savage childhood. Burroughs has Tarzan assume his identity by going back to the jungle, back to the scene of his savage childhood. It is this which marks out his book as quintessentially American. He does not take the name of Greystoke, but keeps his savage name, his "real" name. The name "Tar-zan" means in Burroughs' invented anthropoid language "white-skin". In this way Tarzan's name expresses not just his individual, but also his racial identity, just as his finger-prints mark "racial characteristics". In connection with this I should note that Hauser writes

out his own name, and therefore appears to name himself: though this self-naming is precisely the type of act which marks out his exclusion from the social.

Tarzan achieves a quasi-maturity by marrying Jane, acquires his social identity, but then turns his back on it. Similarly, Jane Porter, who only desires Tarzan when he is a savage, finds her real identity in her primeval nature, rejecting civilisation and returning to an original Eden. Although Tarzan and Jane declare they will return to civilisation to marry officially, in fact they remain in the jungle for perpetuity, in a timeless world. In doing so, Tarzan and Jane create their own identity that is both outside and before civilised society. They reject the world by returning to its beginning.

By doing so Tarzan opts out of a civilization that is seen throughout the *Tarzan* books as inherently "savage". It would seem that this relects contemporary fears of the decline of the west, the decadence of European civilization. Burroughs' response to this "decadence" was one often favoured by writers and artists of the 1910's. We can note that Rupert Brooke's Tahiti poems, Jack London's stories, and Norman Douglas' *South Wind* (London: 1917) are merely contemporary expressions of an artistic trend that goes back at least as far as Diderot. Tarzan embodies another such return to the primitive, back to an origin, to a state before history - a history that now seemed to be inevitably a record of decline. The book was published in an America looking on at a Europe ravaged by an increasingly bloody and senseless war. However, Tarzan's jungle is stable and outside the historical process; it is an evolutionary origin, and as an origin it exists as a place of perpetual renewal. Out of a real, historical Africa, Burroughs imagines an America in the jungle.[56]

Tarzan begins and ends with savagery, and his story embraces primeval passion and

strength, tempered as this is with an aristocratic heredity. Tarzan enters the civilized world, assumes his "real" name there, only to discard it in favour of his savage identity. He returns to a jungle where he will now share his solitude, in a relationship that is assumed to fulfill the real nature of both man and woman. There in the jungle Tarzan reassumes his savage name, his whole story being an exploration of its personal and racial meanings.

In the seventy and more years intervening between Hauser and *Tarzan*, the most notable changes are that the romance plot of the feral child has been reorganised in Imperial and racial terms. Hauser's romance posits his real identity as recoverable, as concerned with his unique distance from social being and then the magical possibility of his discovering that social being. *Tarzan* alludes to this older form of romance, but its driving narrative structure is in fact determined by the fact that Tarzan's real identity is ever present, because it is formulated within his racial being. What the Baden connection is for Hauser, being "white"/aryan is for Tarzan: it guarantees privilege. It was this guarantee which formed the base of the appeal of race theories to the "mob". In the representations of Hauser, the distinction between culture and nature seen in the feral child becomes the necessary loss inflicted on the self in order to be human. Burroughs reverses this loss by returning the human to an essence which is primarily formed in race or species difference. Tarzan's rejection of an identity construed within the boundaries of name and family, places him in an unequivocal relation to his own race, which becomes in this way, a bodily and inescapable form of selfhood. In terms of the romance plot, Tarzan acts as the romance hero who rejects the moment of recognition, in favour of the condition of asocial wildness. Conventionally, this temporary wildness would normally be that which the hero must suffer in order to expiate

the crimes of the elder generation. In the Tarzan story, this desired return to the primitive is equivalent to the rejection of social externalities, in favour of an inwardness which is perfectly commensurable with the presence of the body. In this way he revels in that which Hauser is trapped within, that is the pain of existing within the body only, cut off from the invisible traces of a personal history.

In the nineteenth century we can witness the emergence of two tendencies which are embodied and interpreted in Hauser's narrative. The first is the rise of a concept of the self as revealed within the phenomenology of its own history, a characteristic concept of German Romanticism, and the implied structural unity in the novel of education and the *bildungsroman*. Against this, the century also saw an intense dissatisfaction with the modern self, particularly when compared with the "reality" of Homer's, Dante's, or Shakespeare's characters. We might cite in this context, the writing of Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and Yeats. In this analysis, the modern self is revealed as restless, paltry, bored, and lacking in passion. In modernity, the self exists within its own insufficiency.

Leaving the condition of childhood becomes associated with a fall from a potentiality which is contented into a potentiality which is expressed in terms of frustration, always held back from the fulfillment of meaning. Within the narratives we are exploring here, *Tarzan* enacts a return to the condition of childhood, equated with primitivism, to an immanence which approaches the state of self-realisation. However, Hauser's story presents an individual, who, though childlike, represents the state of exile from childhood, a self unable to cohere or coalesce itself in terms of its own history, and so cut adrift within the process of time - a process which never appears to amount to anything.

The crime against Hauser is therefore the eradication of the self. Deprived of the realisation potentially present in development, Hauser's self dissolves into bewilderment. The traces of a personality that is thoughtful, wondering, and sensitive are only briefly visible within the unsteadiness of his body, and the self which it manifests. The end result of this state is that Hauser remains as mysterious as he was when he first wandered into Nuremberg. The condition of Hauser's existence, both for himself and for others is one of confusion and of unknowability:

> Kaspar Hauser's grave in the public cemetery of Ansbach is marked by a low headstone of granite bearing the inscription: Hic jacet/ Casparus Hauser/ Ænigma/ Sui Temporis/ Ignota Navitas/ Occulta Mors./ MDCCCXXXIII. In the royal park the site of his murder is indicated by a small granite column with the words: Hic/ Occultus/ Occulto/ Occisus est./ XIV Dec./ MDCCCXXXIII. (1892: 178-9).[57]

CHAPTER SIX

THE CHILD OF EMPIRE: KIPLING'S JUNGLE BOOKS

At the age of four, Kipling left Bombay, the city of his birth, for England. In *Something of Myself*, Kipling records that his childhood language, the "idiom that one thought and dreamed in", was not English but the Indian vernacular (Kipling, 1977: 34). On his return to India, fourteen years later, an odd thing happened:

> So, at sixteen years and nine months, but looking four or five years older, and adorned with real whiskers which the scandalized Mother abolished within one hour of beholding, I found myself at Bombay where I was born, moving among sights and smells that made me deliver in the vernacular sentences whose meaning I knew not. Other Indian-born boys have told me how the same thing happened to them (Kipling, 1977: 56).

In this circumstance, Kipling had involuntarily returned to an earlier stage of his own development, a return signified by the re-possession of a childhood language, a language that itself affirms the unconscious re-possession of a place. It is a curious aspect of his autobiography, that of all the places which Kipling records visiting, the only one depicted as strange and exotic is Sussex. On the other hand, Kipling's India is remarkable for being so unremarkable. This is a domesticated Orientalism, both vivid and familiar. It is plain that,

as a child, Kipling experienced England as a place of exile, and India as home. The note of dispossession and linguistic exile that Kipling sounds here is intrinsically a part of the colonial condition. Of course, Kipling's position near the summit of the Imperial hierarchy complicates this dispossession. His writing can be seen as a means of possessing a home, but which, because he is white in a colonial society, nonetheless stands at one remove from him. The vernacular that he spoke on his return to Bombay was subliminal, almost pre-linguistic, since the words he uttered had no meaning to him, but seemed to emerge from a state where language possessed an absolute significance. The words he utters belong to an Indian childhood separated from his later experience in England. This state is prior to and remains underneath his adult and Imperial position. What I want to consider here is how the literary uses of the abandoned and feral child parallel the return to a belonging in a state prior to that of the "civilised", white, and Imperial functionary. For Kipling it is the imaginative recreation of an Indian childhood which allows such a possession to be achieved, through the creation of what might appear to be, in Chesterton's phrase, an "irresponsible place" (Chesterton, 1905: 46).

It is unlikely that Kipling was aware of the European case histories of feral children when he wrote the first of the stories for *The Jungle Book* in 1892.[1] However, he did know of Indian tales of children being reared by wolves. A comment in a letter of 24 November 1892 to Mary Mapes Dodge suggests that he considered this kind of story to be specifically Indian: "Also, there will be (D.V.) a wolf-tale, 'Mowgli's Brothers.' *He* was a wolf-boy (we have them in India) but being caught early was civilized" (Kipling, 1990, 2: 71). Kipling would have encountered stories of this kind in his father's work *Beast and Man in India*:

> India is probably the cradle of wolf-child stories, which are here universally believed and supported by a cloud of testimony, including in the famous Lucknow case of a wolf boy the evidence of European witnesses (John Lockwood Kipling, 1891: 313-4).

Kipling might also have read of such cases in Robert Sterndale's *Natural History of the Mammalia of India and Ceylon* (Calcutta: 1884):

> Stories have been related of wolves sparing and suckling young infants so carried off, which, if properly authenticated, will bring the history of Romulus and Remus within the bounds of probability. I have not by me just now the details of the case of the "Boy-Wolf" of Lucknow, which was, I believe, a case vouched for by credible witnesses. It was that of a boy found in a wolf's lair, who had no power of speech, crawled about on his hands and knees, ate raw flesh, and who showed great wildness in captivity. I think he died soon after being caught. The story of the nursing is not improbable, for well-known instances have been recorded of the ferae, when deprived of their young, adopting young animals, even of those on whom they usually prey (Sterndale, 1884: 233).

Kipling certainly made use of other of Sterndale's works, most notably *Denizens of the Jungles* (Calcutta: 1886), in researching the natural history of *The Jungle Books*. However, the most important possible source for Kipling's stories is W.H. Sleeman's pamphlet, "An Account of Wolves Nurturing Children in their Dens", a work mentioned in almost all contemporary accounts of feral children.[2] Sleeman was the English officer who had conducted the Thugg inquiries. He records an incident of February 1847, in which a boy was discovered at Sultanpoor living in a wolves' den. Sleeman describes how the child behaved exactly like a wolf. He was unable to speak, and could only growl or snarl:

> He understood little of what was said to him, and seemed to take no notice of what was going on around him. He formed no attachment for any one, nor did he seem to care for any one. He never played with any children [...] When not hungry, he used to sit petting or stroking a pariah, or vagrant dog, which he used to permit to feed out of the same dish with him. A short time before his death, Captain Nicholetts shot this dog, as he used to eat the greater part

> of the food given to the boy, who seemed in consequence to be getting thin. The boy did not seem to care, in the least, for the death of the dog [...] He had lived with Captain Nicholetts' servants for about two years, and was never heard to speak till within a few minutes of his death, when he put his hand to his head, and said, "it ached," and asked for water. He drank it and died (Sleeman, 1888: 90).

Sleeman goes on to describe several other cases. The following incident from one of these cases comes closest to the tone of *The Jungle Books.* Janoo was a surgeon who had helped the boy:

> One night, while the boy was lying under the tree near Janoo, Janoo saw two Wolves come up stealthily and smell at the boy. They then touched him, and he got up; and instead of being frightened, the boy put his hands upon their heads, and they began to play with him. They capered around him, and he threw straw and leaves at them. Janoo tried to drive them off, but could not, and became much alarmed [...] The night after three wolves came, and the boy and they played together. A few nights after four Wolves came, but at no time did more than four come; they came four or five times, and Janoo had no longer any fear of them; and he thinks that the first two that came must have been the two cubs with which the boy was first found, and that they were prevented from seizing him by recognising the smell; they licked his face with their tongues as he put his hands on their heads (Sleeman, 1888: 95-6).

Here Sleeman shows abandonment as a blessing, by which the child inhabits the animal world, and is fully at home there. A gap is forded; something lost is restored. If he did not find it in Sterndale, Kipling's remark in "In the Rukh" that wolf-children tend to die young may be drawn from Sleeman's pamphlet, which is particularly insistent on that point. Indeed it may be this moment which forms the ulimate source for the note of wonder in the first Mowgli story.

A consideration of Sleeman's pamphlet appears in E.B. Tylor's short essay on "Wild Men and Beast Children", printed in the first volume of *The Anthropological Review* (London, 1863: 21-32), amongst accounts of several other feral children stories. Tylor's

attitude is fundamentally sceptical:

> The whole evidence in the matter comes to this. First, that in different parts of the world children have been found in a state of brutalization, due to want of education or to congenital idiocy, or to both; and secondly, that people often believe that those children have been living among wild beasts, a supposition which accounts for their beast-like nature (Tylor, 1863: 29).

Other accounts of Indian wolf children include mentions by Valentin Ball and a reference in the *North Indian Notes and Queries*, March 1893. In *Jungle Life in India* (London: 1880), Valentin Ball describes the wolf-boy of Sekandra, considering the boy to be a perfect beast. He runs through Sleeman's case histories, and pointedly remarks that these kinds of incident only happen to boys. The notice in *North Indian Notes and Queries* probably occurs too late to be a direct source for Kipling's tales:

> A correspondent, writing to the *Statesman*, says: - We have heard of Peter the wild boy discovered in 1725 in the forest of Hertswold, and the wild girl, Mddle. Lablanc, found near Chalons, in 1731. But here is a living wild girl come down to Calcutta who was nursed by a bear. She is really an unsophisticated specimen of the *genus homo*. She was found sitting by a huge bear near a den in a forest in Jalpaigori, by the coolies of the tea gardens. The latter, seeing this strange phenomenon, ran to their *Saheb*, who, on hearing the account, went up with a gun, frightened the bear away, and took over the girl, who was then about two or three years of age, to the local Commissioner, and through him placed her in the Jalpaigori hospital. At first the poor creature used to walk on all fours, and bite and scratch, but gradually she became tame, and was taught to walk on her feet and wear clothes, but could not articulate a single word. The Civil Surgeon, after trying unsuccessfully for three years to teach her to speak, discharged her. She then lived on the mercy of the children and women of the place, till at last Babu Pran Krishna Datta, a Brahmo Missionary, took pity on her, and with the permission of the Civil Surgeon, brought her to Calcutta, and placed her under the hospitable care of the *Dassaram* - a friendly institution for suffering and helpless humanity at large, - at Mohendra Nath Goswami's Lane, Simla, Calcutta (*Wolf-Children*, 1893: 215-6).

Frazer's notes to Ovid's *Fasti* (London: 1929) include a reasonably detailed examination of

these Indian cases in the context of his discussion of the Romulus and Remus story.

While Rudyard Kipling was keen to assert the Indian nature of these tales, it is possible that he used sources closer to hand. Kipling wrote *The Jungle Books* at Naulahka, his house in Vermont, between 1892 and 1894. It so happens that at this time in New England there were a series of "wild man" stories: one in Connecticut in 1892; one in New York State in 1893; two sightings in 1895; and another in Colebrook, Connecticut, in 1895. These stories may well be coincidental, but it is a matter of interest, that the first of them should occur on 11th November, 1892, within a hundred miles of Kipling's home near Brattleboro, in the same week when he began to write his Mowgli stories.

Perhaps the most significant of the sources for Kipling's *Jungle Books* was his own story, "In The Rukh" (Kipling, 1893: 189-225). ("Rukh" is a vernacular word for forest or jungle). It is clear from several points in *The Jungle Books* that in his own mind Kipling retained "In the Rukh" as the true end of the Mowgli stories, although he was careful to assert that this end would only be of interest to adults. In "In the Rukh", Gisborne, a warden of the Department of Woods and Forests, encounters Mowgli, now an adult wolf-boy, living in the woods. Mowgli is seen throughout as solitary and dispossessed. Yet while he does not fit into human society, within the forest he is happy and at home. There he exercises complete authority over all the jungle animals. The story shows Mowgli forsaking this solitary rule and presenting himself for service to Gisborne. He gives to Gisborne, the nominal "warden" of the forest, the gift of his real wardenship.

From the first sentences of the story, the question is posed as to who owns the rukh. Gisborne is a member of a bureaucracy which orders and rules the forest. His appointed task

is to make the wilderness orderly and purposeful. As if to prove the futility of such action, into this well-run orderliness there intrudes something unexpected and unaccountable - that is, Mowgli. There is no place for Mowgli in Gisborne's world, just as there is no place for him in the rigid, hierarchical structure of Indian society. It is telling that Gisborne's first instinct is to wish that he might press the stranger into his service, where he might fit in to his established scheme of things.

Yet while Mowgli is out of place in human society, he appears at home in the forest. So close is Mowgli's identification with the forest that he seems at time to be its god. Frequently, Kipling describes Mowgli as though he were a pagan deity: "'He's the most wonderful chap,' thought Gisborne; 'he's like the illustrations in the Classical Dictionary. I wish I could have made him a gun-boy'" (Kipling, 1893: 194). So Mowgli is not an Indian god, but a "likeness of that Greek god who is so lavishly described in the novels" (Kipling, 1893: 198). Kipling is having things both ways here: he presents Mowgli as a pagan god, but mocks the use of such figures in contemporary fiction. Mowgli is the child-like god, the embodiment of the wild forest, the wild man carrying a branch as a club. More than this, Kipling asserts that this god-like man represents our evolutionary origin, an origin which in this case was plainly an Eden, a harmony with nature:

> "Dis man haf lived, and he is an anachronism, for he is before der Iron Age, and der Stone Age. Look here, he is at der beginnings of der history of man - Adam in der Garden, und now we only want an Eva! No! He is older than dat child-tale, shust as der rukh is older than der gods. Gisborne, I am a Bagan now, once for all" (Kipling, 1893: 216-7).

So says Muller, Gisborne's German friend. Here the comic accent allows Kipling to suggest a mystery, without appearing to wholeheartedly endorse it. The tale flirts with an incipient

embarrassment about its own subject-matter. Yet, it is clear that while Mowgli has no place within human society, in the forest he is triumphantly in possession.

That Gisborne sees a potential servant in Mowgli suggests much about Gisborne's mentality, but also hints at the nature of his relationship to Mowgli. Each character sees himself in Mowgli and their attempts to place him are largely self-revelatory; Gisborne sees in Mowgli a servant; Abdul Gafur, Gisborne's dishonest servant, imagines him to be a thief. What this reveals about Mowgli is that he exists as a repository of possible identities. Like the wilderness itself, the most important thing about him is that he is as yet unformed. He stands outside the condition of civilised society, and so is able to suggest innumerable as yet unrealised possibilities. He is described as a demon, ghost, god, child, gun-boy, thief, beast, and pre-historic man. His identification with an evolutionary origin further implies that he stands before the process of civilisation.

Gisborne is the warden of the forest, but any claim to rule it appears ridiculous, once he is confronted by Mowgli. Their relationship is conducted like a courtship, with Mowgli slipping always out of reach of the white man's intentions. Mowgli impresses Gisborne with a party-trick of herding animals from the forest, but Gisborne is disturbed by his actions. They are gratuitous, pointless, and they appear to him to disturb the natural order of things. Mowgli fetches for Gisborne a nilghai from the heart of the rukh, and the animal's perplexity at being taken from its accustomed course arouses in Gisborne thoughts about who really possesses the forest. The nilghai is taken from "the night which should have been his own" (Kipling, 1893: 200).

At two points in the narrative, Kipling depicts the whites as mildly ludicrous figures.

While Mowgli roams his forest, garlanded with wreaths of flowers, beautiful and almost naked, Gisborne dresses for dinner, encasing himself in a starched white shirt, keeping up social appearances in a place where they carry no force or meaning. Later, when Muller and Gisborne meet in the forest they enact a bizarre version of a civilised meal in the middle of the forest. Here the formalities of civilised life are pointless and ridiculous, yet acquire an odd dignity in their complete incongruity. In comparison with Mowgli it is the whites who appear childish, clinging to forms of behaviour that are out of place in this wild context.

Yet Mowgli defers to Gisborne. Although he is the god of the forest, wandering through the place at will, in complete possession, he acknowledges the ordinary, unexceptional Englishman as his master. There seems no doubt that we are meant to judge this as a kind of liberation: "'It is the sahib's rukh,' said Mowgli, quickly looking up" (Kipling, 1893: 204). Unlike Abdul's daughter who exchanges her abject service to her father for marriage with Mowgli, Mowgli has served no-one but himself. It is by entering service that Mowgli assumes a place in society; his work with Gisborne and his courtship of the girl both possess a social function. He is no longer solitary; he is no longer the forest god. This may disappoint us, having read *The Jungle Books*, but that it is the logical fate for Mowgli, and the one that Kipling always intended, is equally indisputable.

It is obvious that this tale has its Imperial message. Kipling makes clear from the start that the Department represents the whole Imperial management of India. Mowgli is the genius of the place, the pagan, aboriginal spirit of India, and he surrenders himself to Gisborne. It is almost certain that Kipling meant this to bear a racial, hierarchical meaning. Mowgli sees literally in Gisborne what he would fain call master. However it is worth

remembering that Gisborne is not the owner of the rukh, but its warden. He is a steward (self-appointed, perhaps) who must sacrifice himself for the needs of the forest. He owes service to this duty. Kipling implies that everyone must be in service to something, for it is in service that we take on the adult responsibilities of life.

Following "In The Rukh", probably written not long before he began the Mowgli stories, Kipling continued to explore ideas of service in *The Jungle Books*. This theme received its most overt treatment in the story "Servants of the Queen", the last story in *The Jungle Book* (1894) and again placed at the end of the book in the Sussex edition of *The Jungle Books*. In this story, the animals of a military camp spend a sleepless night before a grand military inspection by a subject Afghan potentate. On the day of the inspection near chaos is avoided by the discipline of the animals. Service is depicted as dignity. Each animal serves according to its nature, submitting to its duty, as to its fate. In the final prose section of the book, Kipling writes a paean to the necessity of service. In the British Army (and by implication under British rule) everyone serves someone, in a long chain of command stretching from the mules to Queen Victoria. This submission to hierarchy, controlling even the animals, is the reason and the excuse for British rule:

> "'Would it were so in Afghanistan!' said the chief, 'for there we obey only our own will.' 'And for that reason,' said the native officer, twirling his moustache, 'your Amir whom you do not obey must come here and take orders from our Viceroy'" (Kipling, 1894: 208-9).[3]

It is significant that the speaker is a *native* officer: by submitting to the English hierarchy of rule, he partakes in its dignity (though the detail of him twirling his moustache perhaps makes this a comic dignity).

The concluding poem of the book, following immediately after this discussion of the virtues of rule and order, offers a contrasting vision of service. In their service, the animals (and by extension the native officer) are like children, submitting to an external discipline:

> Children of the camp are we,
> Serving each in his degree;
> Children of the yoke and goad,
> Pack and harness, pad and load (Kipling, 1894: 211-212).

However, service means both hardship and a bulwark against uncertainty. The animals submit to external duty to escape chaos and terror. Yet their service itself is seen as a stoic endurance of inescapable suffering:

> While the men that walk beside,
> Dusty, silent, heavy-eyed,
> Cannot tell why we or they
> March and suffer day by day (Kipling, 1894: 212).

It is the dailiness of the suffering that is most impressive in this poem. Everything is unremitting and enclosed. The short-lined couplets enact this sense of restriction, as does the repetition of the first lines at the end of the poem. This constriction is also a tight discipline.

The sense of enclosure and oppression is characteristic of Kipling's early stories and poems. Kipling's characters adhere to a code of honour and decency, the code of the boy's book, of the British Empire. Its virtues are reticence, stoicism, and what Philip Marlowe would call "professional pride". It rests tacitly on a conception of duty. This conception must remain tacit, and to mention it is "bad form", almost a lapse in taste.

The racial component of this code is plain. All races have their specific virtues and failings. It so happens that at this point in history, the British (usually Anglo-Saxon) race is the most fit to rule. This state of affairs is not taken for granted. British rule was seen almost

from its inception as fragile and inevitably bound by time; like the Romans, we would have our day. British rule could only continue while we were worthy and manly enough to guarantee its moral and effectual value. The decadence of Rome was a perilous warning.

British rule was fit to continue only because it stood for greater civilisation and greater freedom. Yet rule was a burden to the ruler; the freedom was only for his charges. Rule was service. The master wears himself out on behalf of the natives like a benevolent father working for his wayward children - and literally children, as evolutionary theories were happy to suggest. There would be no thanks and no reward. He must expect neither.

Kipling's writing is therefore characterised by two complementary ideas: that human life is largely an affair of hopeless suffering, attaining at times to the quality of a nightmare; and that, against this suffering, men construct a bulwark of reticence and duty to their work, a task which is the expression of their place within society. In this context, service to another is at best a defence, though perhaps an essential one.

What are the characters like who live under this code? It is often thought that Kipling's characters are jingoistic, narrow-minded, and coarse, as though Kipling were celebrating the dutiful and pragmatic at the expense of the sensitive and imaginative. However, perhaps the reverse is true. Kipling's characters use reticence and stoic endurance as a means of subduing their too strong imagination, their too violent sufferings. They endure in a world where to think too deeply is to invite madness and despair, undertaking their duty against an unshifting background of nightmare. In many early stories, such as "The Man Who Would Be King", "At the End of the Passage", or "The Mark of the Beast", reality is depicted as so terrifying that there can only be a refusal to contemplate its full horrors. These stories

are fantasies, but in the realistic early stories and the novel, *The Light That Failed*, we find the same fear of reality's enclosure. In "Beyond the Pale", the girl's horrific mutilation *seems* inescapable, the inevitable outcome of the way in which life is ordered. Kipling eludes any sense of compassion in this story, as if the horror was too great for compassion. There are only the facts of the case. It can be argued that if, in Kipling's stories, things are ordered that way, then that is only because Kipling so orders them, or that the stories imply a conservative acquiescence to the prevailing order of things. The vision of reality as nightmarish would then be just pathological or political, an expression of what is often termed Kipling's "vulgarity". However, this sense of horror at life is one of Kipling's strengths. It does not exclude compassion. Kipling's reticent, plain style is an expression of the hopelessness of compassion, not simply of its absence.

The Jungle Books establish an atmosphere of oppression and violence. The villagers oppress each other, tying up Messua and her husband with the intention of burning them alive. It is this cruelty which turns Mowgli away from human beings. Humans oppress the animals; the animals oppress each other. There is no explanation for this; it is just in the way of things. Everything has its place, immutably and forever. The seal culls in "The White Seal", the grim waiting for carrion in "The Undertakers", and especially the manifestations of human cruelty in "Letting In The Jungle" all suggest both the presence of violence, but also something of its inevitability.

It is curious how often traps play a part in the plots of Kipling's jungle stories. In "Tiger, Tiger" the tale revolves around Mowgli's struggle to trap Shere Khan in the gulley. In "The King's Ankus", the White Cobra attempts to trap Mowgli, believing him to be a man.

Mowgli only escapes through the intervention of Kaa, his animal helper, but the White Cobra calls after him that the Ankus will trap him after all. However, the Ankus has no power over Mowgli because he does not possess the human instincts of greed. Only in so far as he is not a man can Mowgli free himself from the trap. Nature is seen as a state of war, a matter of setting traps and attempting to escape them. The jungle is a place of casual violence.[4] The grim tale "The Undertakers" describes, a little gleefully, this atmosphere of mutual mistrust. The violence is casual, but it is also essential. Without violence and killing life in the jungle would end. Life exists here in a cycle of violence that is also continuous renewal; all animals in the end come to be eaten by Chil the kite, just as when Rikki-Tikki Tavi has killed Nagina, "the red ants that live between the grass stems heard him, and began to troop down one after another to see if he had spoken truth" (Kipling, 1894: 148).[5] There is a Darwinian element to this. Kipling raises Darzee's pity for the dead cobra eggs in such a way that even a child would find it pointless and contemptible. Kipling deliberately precludes pity as out of place here, just as Darzee's song in honour of Mowgli is a misplaced song, coming before his victory is complete. Interestingly, the general fear of jungle life, once described by Kipling as a source of excitement for the animals (Kipling, 1895: 5), is only ended, according to the Law of the Jungle, when all lives are threatened equally, such as in the drought in "How Fear Came".

Everything exists in a perpetual hierarchy:

> Shiv, who poured the harvest and made the winds to blow,
> Sitting at the doorways of a day of long ago,
> Gave to each his portion, food and toil and fate,
> From the king upon the *guddee* to the Beggar at the gate (Kipling, 1894: 184).

Mowgli's return to the jungle implies that he opts out of this eternal oppressive order; he hopes to live in freedom. In Kafka's words, he would rather lie down with the animals than stand up with the men.

However, as Daniel Karlin argues in his introduction to *The Jungle Books* (Harmondsworth: 1987), in this environment, the nature of an animal itself is a kind of trap, fitting it into one kind of life, which it must live inescapably. This aspect of the stories may owe something to John Lockwood Kipling's description of Oriental poetry in *Beast and Man in India:*

> ... we should remember that Oriental poetry and legend have adopted from the earliest times a series of similitudes to which they adhere with mechanical fidelity. There is a polity of animals, so to speak. The jackal is cunning and clever; the tiger is fierce and deadly, but may be ignominiously deceived by clever jackals and old women, [...] the crow is sly and ready [...] the monkey is intelligent and akin to man; the serpent [...] is secret, malignant and powerful [...] and so forth and so following; but the elephant invariably appears as the image of power and might in war (John Lockwood Kipling, 1891: 246).

Kipling works in a similar way. Once Kipling has established the inherent nature of a creature it becomes a given thing. The war between Rikki-Tikki Tavi and the cobras has no other reason than that the mongoose and the snake must always fight. It's part of their nature, and alights on them almost as a duty:

> He was afraid for the minute; but it is impossible for a mongoose to stay frightened for any length of time, and though Rikki-tikki had never met a live cobra before, his mother had fed him on dead ones, and he knew that all a grown mongoose's business in life was to fight and eat snakes. Nag knew that too and, at the bottom of his cold heart, he was afraid (Kipling, 1894: 129-131).

The shape of that short paragraph enacts something of the reciprocity that exists between

Rikki and Nag, the two phrases "He was afraid" balancing each other. The fear moves from Rikki into the snake. Yet, for all that it binds them together, this reciprocity reveals an instinctual enmity. The world of nature that exists prior to that of civilisation and artifice is revealed here as a state of continuous struggle and violence.

Just as the animals must fulfil their nature, so must Mowgli. The story of Mowgli in *The Jungle Books* is of his progress away from the jungle, savagery, and his childish irresponsibility, and towards a tentative maturity, an acceptance of his place in the human world. Mowgli grows up guided by a series of fathers (including the bad father, Shere Khan), a member of a secret society of animals (the influence of Freemasonry on these tales has often been noted).[6] Mowgli's ultimate fate casts its shadow through all the stories, though with gathering strength in "Red Dog" where Akela's prophecy predicts Mowgli's inevitable desertion of the jungle. So while Mowgli lives in the jungle, we remain aware of how his time is only leased, a postponement of an unavoidable end; "'Man goes to Man at the last'" (Kipling, 1895: 64).

Mowgli's end is prefigured in one of the non-Indian stories, "Quiquern". In this story, Kotuko, an Inuit child, is initiated into manhood. He is given a dog, whom he names after himself. A girl, Amoraq, comes to stay in his family's house, and "Kotuko the boy and Kotuko the dog were rather fond of her" (Kipling, 1895: 152). Famine strikes the community, and "Quiquern" becomes another of *The Jungle Books'* tales of the struggle to survive. In order to live, Kotuko is forced to kill (and we might guess eat) his namesake dog. It would not be stretching the symbolism of this tale too far to suggest that this action represents the end of Kotuko's childhood, his putting aside of his animal nature in the

perpetual struggle to live and fend for himself and his family. It may even be that this is intended to represent the slaying of a totemised representation of himself, the murder of his animal nature in an action which signals his acceptance of necessity. Kotuko goes off into the wilderness with Amoraq and they find a new source of food, so saving their tribe.

Mowgli's assumption of his true nature occurs with the awakening in himself of his sexuality. This is the one responsibility that he cannot shirk. He must end his solitude, and join with another of his nature. There may be an apt Freudian reading of this. The polymorphously perverse and undifferentiated child is placed through the castration complex under the aegis of a patriarchal law. Unfortunately, this ignores how the jungle world is itself defined by the operation of a Law, and by the presence of fathers. The original nature of the child, including its aspect of undetermined sexual identity, would occupy a place within the Law. The experience of play becomes a necessary section of a Law that proscribes multiplicity of identity.

When Mowgli comes out of the jungle, he appears as a "'Godling of the woods'" (Kipling, 1895: 225). Yet Mowgli must disavow this savage aspect of himself. He reassumes his real name, Nathoo, son of Messua. In taking the name that his parents gave to him Mowgli lays claim to his position in human society. Yet strangely Mowgli does not go to a wife but back to his mother, although the last illustration in the book, by John Lockwood Kipling, makes it plain that Mowgli does marry. This depicts a middle-aged Indian in a turban sitting in a room with a woman of his age, with a child on her knee. The man stares out through the open door, thoughtfully, into the jungle. He has a full moustache, and a passing resemblance to Kipling. It is possible that *The Jungle Books* were a wish-fulfilment on

Kipling's part. They were written shortly after his hasty marriage to Carrie Balestier, following the death of her brother, Kipling's best friend, Wolcott Balestier. Perhaps John Lockwood Kipling means to imply that his son is hankering in these stories for a time when he felt his own personality to be free, before he entered the fixity and responsibility of marriage?

Although *The Jungle Books* affirm the necessity of following the duty of one's nature, they also celebrate the freedom that exists before this duty is assumed. Mowgli's position in the jungle is especially privileged, almost pre-lapsarian. Mowgli is both the friend and the master of the other animals. Once again, Mowgli's mastery is purely the result of his nature; the other animals cannot meet his gaze simply because he is human. In the jungle, Mowgli does not need to struggle for survival. Though alone, he lives in a state of companionship with the Free Animals. Mowgli exists in a pure relation; he wants nothing from the animals. It is significant that we never see him embarked on a kill, or hunting for food. He is either at play, or using trickery and ingenuity to get the better of some enemy, and always his trick is accomplished through the co-operation, willing or otherwise, of some other animal.

In the jungle, Mowgli possesses a double identity, he is both man and animal. It is likely that this freedom of identity, unfixed and fluid, is as much a condition of his childhood as of his savagery. Throughout the stories it remains a matter of confusion as to whether Mowgli is a boy or an animal. He himself oscillates between one and the other according to his mood and circumstance:

> "Mowgli the Frog have I been," said he to himself, "Mowgli the Wolf have I said that I am. Now Mowgli the Ape I must be before I am Mowgli the Buck. At the end I shall be Mowgli the Man" (Kipling, 1895: 191).

In the end, Akela tells his foster-child: "'Mowgli will drive Mowgli. Go back to thy people. Go to Man'" (Kipling, 1895: 204). Mowgli's multiple-identity ends; he becomes simply a man. However, there remains a sense of a multitude of choices, as though Mowgli had the opportunity to become anything, despite our certain knowledge that he must become an adult, civilised man. The positioning of the stories themselves, as they originally appeared in *The Jungle Book* and *The Second Jungle Book*, suggests that Mowgli is an animal among other animals, just another inhabitant of the jungle. The force of the myth of the jungle as a place where the individual may try out identities, as a child does, is greater than the heaviness which Mowgli assumes in returning to mankind. Mowgli's solitude itself is, while he is a child, an opportunity and a freedom. He is responsible to no-one.

Mowgli then glories in his dispossession; his typical poem is one of unabashed triumph against his enemies and glory in his own identity. This is why "In The Rukh" remained in Kipling's eyes "a story for grown-ups." In that story, and to an adult reader in *The Jungle Books* themselves, the emphasis falls on responsibility, on the necessity to live our lives as human beings. For Mowgli, and for child readers, this responsibility can hardly be said to exist as yet. For the adult reader Mowgli embodies a wish that must remain unfulfilled. In Kipling's text, the idea of play, of freedom from responsibility is itself envisaged in *social* terms. Mowgli retreats from the human world into another kind of society, one governed by a Law which can be felt as irreducibly present even in the human world - an underlying and essential series of facts about the world as it is. The child prepares for society by inhabiting a world which in fact mirrors that society. Only the essential brutality and honesty of the animal world separates it from its degenerate human examplar. Kipling knows that we cannot

be simply animals, we cannot try out different natures in complete freedom. Mowgli can be anything for a while, in the jungle, as a child and a savage, and *The Jungle Books* are a celebration of that indeterminacy, for all that they point to its eventual close.

That the aim of this creation of an irresponsible place is in fact partly a justification for Imperial possession becomes plain when we consider *Kim*. *Kim* is a spiritual quest conducted within the form of the Imperial boy's book. The boy's book celebrates the idea of possibility, that the world contains every possible adventure. In desiring adventure for its own sake, the boy's book, like the romance form to which it is so closely related, affirms the beauty of the world. It everywhere alludes to the love of created things. As a form the boy's book expresses desire for the world, a desire realised within the British Empire, although, for Kipling, not as a pursuit for material gain. (Those who seek to exploit the material prospects of Empire end badly, like Dravot, mad and crucified at the close of "The Man Who Would Be King"). However, the acceptance of things as they are can easily become an acquiescence to the form of society itself, as though it too were necessary and marvellous. This can sanction injustice. Moreover, in Imperial terms, such acceptance shades into an expression of the desire for expansion for its own sake: that desire which led Rhodes to declare that if he could, he would annex the moon. In this way, the adventurer becomes a function of a political process that dehumanises him, making him literally a cipher of power. *Kim* escapes this process through the presence of the Lama, and all that he represents. Kipling brings the contrary desire to the form of the boy's book: that is, to escape from the world and its suffering. Kipling's achievement is to show that these two contraries somehow contain each other, meeting in the idea of service.

The theme of *Kim* is exchange; the exchange of service, the exchange of alms for merit, but especially the exchange of one identity for another. Kim's playful disguises are the means by which he moves at will through all sections and castes of Indian society. All India is available to him because he is able at will to become anybody. Kim's freedom to explore possibilities within himself and within society is guaranteed by his status as a child. As a child Kim exists at one remove from the political necessities of Imperial society. He is an orphan, unrecognised and all but invisible to authority.

Yet, like Mowgli, his playfulness is made to be constrained by a discipline. He is pressed into service, and that which was gratuitous in him becomes functional. For The Great Game that Kim is invited to play is not a game at all, but the elaborate means by which British rule is maintained over a subject nation. It would be absurd to suggest that Kim's activities are not underwritten by his status as a white, that his play is not political, and that the celebration of the justice of Imperial rule was not Kipling's object. However, in closing this section, I would like to suggest that the meaning of Kipling's work was, unconsciously or not, anti-Imperial.

Kipling believed in racial hierarchy, and he had few doubts that the English were, for the time being, at the summit of that hierarchy. Yet in Mowgli and in Kim, Kipling celebrates the loosening of hierarchical rigidity through free and easy movement up and down their structures - though in each case this is a movement guaranteed by the innate superiority of the individual in question. As Mowgli tries out being an animal, Kim tries out being a native; their return from these "descents" is possible because Mowgli is inescapably a man, Kim a white. The main reason that white children, such as Kipling, were sent "home" and educated

in England was the widespread belief that a white child growing up in the Indian climate would automatically tend to degenerate; that is remain stuck at the beginning of evolutionary development. The idea that a child in growing up recapitulated the evolution of the human race from savagery to civilisation, coupled with the popular belief that Indian culture was itself stuck and unable to progress, led to the idea that a white child growing up in India would itself be unable to develop, and would, in going native, remain perpetually a child and a savage.[7]

It is possible that in depicting Kim, a white child "gone native", forced by circumstance to grow up in the Indian climate, Kipling was in fact celebrating the experience of degeneracy (an experience denied to himself by exile to England), in so far as this is in fact a return to the condition of "the state of nature". Kim's "degeneracy" is in fact a process of exchange and metamorphosis, the ability to become, at will, something else, and also a perpetual childhood, a state implicitly antagonistic to the exigencies and responsibilities of adult life. Though this movement downwards is based upon racist assumptions, it also expresses a longing to opt out of the processes of rule and duty, a longing for the irresponsible place. Although irredeemably a sahib, Kim's story expresses the notion that there are better things to be.

Kipling appears tentative about what it means to explore the possibilities of identity: if Mowgli and Kim express one kind of escape from our nature, then the spiritual quests of Purun Bhagat and the lama represent another. Where Mowgli's exchange of identities is integrally part of his childishness, Purun Bhagat's spiritual search for freedom from his human nature (a search which re-establishes a pure relation with the animals) is a condition of his

age. Where Mowgli is all energy, Purun is all stillness: yet both embody the same desire - to slip the bonds of human nature. The relation between Kim and the lama is more complex. Kim's discipleship is one of his many educations; the lama instructs him in holy wisdom in order that he might pass beyond the limitations of humanity. It is curious that the lama is himself described consistently as childlike; the nature of his relation with Kim is founded upon his childish inability to survive in the bustling world. In retaining the desire not to enter the world, but rather to transcend its suffering, the lama remains childish. On the other hand, Kim is offered a premature adulthood (itself one of the conditions of degeneracy) in which his playful skills will embroil him in a world dependent upon violence, deceptions, and political manoeuvres. Kim's Imperial educations are designed to regulate his growing up, to make him useful, an active, if secret, member of a society based on the idea of caste and domination. (It is noteworthy that the lama dismisses the idea of caste as meaningless). However the Great Game and all that it entails seems to be equated with Kim's love of the world; it depends upon his endless curiosity, his insatiable desire and appetite for novelty. Conversely, the lama represents the refusal to look upon life, the desire to fall out of love with the created world.

Imperial service exploits Kim's playful disguises, and provides a field of action where his lust for life will acquire a precise, social purpose. Yet Kim's final vision of his place in the great and terrible world, and the acceptance of the smallness and value of his own life within that world, has no Imperial meaning, although it could only take place within an Imperial context. Kim realises simply that he must be Kim. It is strangely parallel to the lama's own vision of India which occurs as he prepares to leave human life for ever. Yet the lama returns

to the world in order to share his freedom with Kim. It seems that Kipling was referring here to the mystical ideas of Tibetan Buddhism, where the soul at its moment of freedom feels such love and compassion for the souls still bound upon the wheel of suffering, that it voluntarily returns to the world. The love of the created world, the love exchanged between the lama and the child is greater than the desire to escape the wheel of suffering. Both the lama and Kim end reconciled to life, and to their relationship to each other, a relationship which has no ulterior social purpose and no Imperial usefulness. If not understood, it is, at best, merely tolerated by Kim's Imperial mentors. Their reconciliation takes place beyond the notice of the authorities.

It is likely that this reading of *Kim* involves a privileging of the idea of exchange and reciprocity, that elides the elements of antagonism present in the moment of "gift exchange", as depicted by Rousseau and Mauss. This may sentimentalize *Kim*, since even in the relation between Kim and the lama, some aspect of mutual oppression and even oppression as such (the Imperial theme) remains.

However, part of the importance of *Kim* is that it offers an intelligent and politically knowing transgression of the very Imperial ideas that Kipling consciously endorsed. Kim's skill at disguise and his employment as a spy spring from his skills of observation and his imaginative identification with others. For a while, at least, he can exchange the absolute duty of his own identity and become someone else. That these processes are the basis of Kipling's art is made explicit in *Something of Myself* when Kipling's first experience of his "Daemon" occurs with his "first serious attempt to think in another man's skin" (Kipling, 1977: 157). Kipling's career as an artist is the expression of a tentative rebuttal of the ideas which he

consciously expressed, an affirmation of the value of gratuitous play set against the demands of duty and the God of the Copybook Headings. Kipling ascribes to the Romantic notion of the origin as essence, an absolute state prior to the political realm - a notion that Derrida has been at particular pains to deconstruct. What Derrida does not take into account is that the idea of play is fundamental to this pre-political state. The fictionality of this idea, and its human desirability, however suspect, ensure that in art, as in a savage childhood, the individual may dream of establishing a free place of play where they can, for a while, be someone else.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

E.B. Tylor closes his essay on feral children with the following remarks:

> The original man, as the poet describes them, roaming, "a dumb and miserable herd," about the woods, do not exist on the earth. The inquirer who seeks to find out the beginnings of man's civilization must deduce general principles by reasoning downwards from the civilized European to the savage, and then descend to still lower possible levels of human existence, with such assistance as he gain from the study of the undeveloped human mind in children, and in the blind and deaf and dumb [...] (Tylor, 1863: 32).

The place occupied by the feral child is here replaced by a proposed study of the minds of the "savage" and of the child. In closing my own study I wish to show that to understand the history of the feral child up to the end of the First World War, it is necessary to see how the condition of "savagery" previously imagined in individual children increasingly became attached to childhood in general. The representation of feral children was grafted onto an

understanding of childhood as primitive, an embodiment in the present of an atavistic past. This archaic quality of childhood was, through certain developments in evolutionary theory, understood in terms of "savagery". Finally, this dual condition of child and "savage" was connected to the experience of interiority, of the unconsciousness. Aberrational states increasingly were seen in terms of their childlikeness and their "savagery".

The representation of the child as "savage" gathers force with the biological identification of the child with the primitive in recapitulation theory. Sir Edwin Ray Lankester, the eminent biologist, defines recapitulation in a lecture given at the British Association in 1880:

> There is a very strong reason to believe that it is a general law of transmission or inheritance, that structural characteristics appear in the growth of a young organism in the order in which these characteristics have been acquired by its ancestors [...] Accordingly the phases of development or growth of the young are a brief recapitulation of the phases of form through which ancestors of the young creature have passed (Lankester, 1880: 21).

Scientists found evidence for this belief both in the developmental stages of embryos, and in the fossil record. Recapitulation, the belief that ontogeny repeats phylogeny, was a model of development that came to enjoy wide acceptance among the biologists, and, through their influence, anthropologists and psychologists of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. It was perhaps only an especially appealing fiction, but its influence in society was profound.

Gradually recapitulation began to be applied to the child as well as to the foetus. Psychologists asserted that a child's individual development recapitulates the history of mankind, the child developing through savagery and barbarism before attaining adult

civilisation:

> Touching the psychogenesis of a child [...] that the condition to this advance in mental evolution is given by a perceptibly progressive development of those powers of denotative and connotative utterance which are found as far down in the psychological scale as the talking birds; that in the growing intelligence of a child we have as complete a history of "ontogeny," in its relation to "phylogeny" as that upon which the embryologist is accustomed to rely when he needs the morphological history of a species in the epitome which is furnished by the development of an individual; and, therefore, that those are without excuse who, elsewhere adopting the principles of evolution, have gratuitously ignored the direct evidence of psychological transmutation which is thus furnished by the life-history of every individual human being (Romanes, 1888: 431-2).

In psychology, Granville Stanley Hall's *Adolescence* (New York:1904) and James Mark Baldwin's *Mental Development in the Child and the Race* (New York: 1895) both follow a recapitulatory model of child development. (In Baldwin's case this model was strongly influenced by Romanes and Herbert Spencer). Psycho-analysis also adopted recapitulation as one basis for its theories. Freud believed that ontogeny repeating phylogeny was an inescapable fact of mental life:

> All that we find in the prehistory of neuroses is that a child catches hold of phylogenetic experience when his own experience fails him. He fills in the gaps in individual truth with prehistoric truth; he replaces occurrences in his own life by occurrences in the life of his ancestors (Freud, 1979b : 337).

Recapitulation, with its model of growth based around the lifetime of one individual, suggested that some races were permanently stuck at a lower evolutionary level, in the childhood of man:

> Most savages in most respects are children, or, because of sexual maturity, more properly, adolescents of adult size [...] Their faults and their virtues are those of childhood and youth [...] Primitive peoples have the same right to linger in the paradise of childhood. To war upon them is to war on children. To commercialize and oppress them with work is child labour on a large

> scale. Without them our earthly home would be left indeed desolate. They live a life of feeling, emotion and impulse, and scores of testimonials from those who know them intimately, and who have no predilection for Rousseau-like views, are to the effect that to know a typical savage is to love him [...] Their condition is very much like that which Homer describes in which law, literature, religion, science, ethics, art, and all the other elements of culture are not specialized but implicit in the daily life and mind of each individual (Hall, 1904, 2: 649-650).

If here recapitulation allows a liberal, if deeply condescending, stance, exactly the same arguments - that savages are overly emotional, irrational and naturally irresponsible - were adopted by imperialist and racist writers to affirm the necessity of controlling and directing their lives.

Explicit comparison between children and savages is central to the anthropology and psychology of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Sir John Lubbock's *The Origin of Civilisation* (1879) traces the similarity of the emotional lives of children and savages:

> I would call particular attention to the remarkable similarity between the mental characteristics of savages and those of children [...] M. Bourien, speaking of the wild tribes in the Malayan Peninsula, says that an "inconstant humour, fickle and erratic, together with a mixture of fear, timidity, and diffidence, lies at the bottom of their character; they seem always to think that they would be better in any place than in the one they occupy at the time. Like children, their actions seem to be rarely guided by reflection, and they almost always act impulsively." The tears of the South Sea Islanders "like those of children, were always ready to express any passion that was strongly excited, and, like those of children, they also appear to be forgotten as soon as they are shed" (Lubbock, 1911: 544).

Inspired by the work of English anthropologists, such as Lang, Lubbock and E.B. Tylor, as well as the psychological work of Wilhelm Wundt, Freud based his investigations of totemism among savage tribes from its persistence in children:

> An attempt is made in this volume to deduce the original meaning of totemism from the vestiges remaining of it in childhood - from the hints of it which emerge in the course of the growth of our own children (Freud, 1957: xiv).

In *Psychoanalytic Notes on an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia* ("Schreber") (1911), Freud ends his case history by urging that anthropology could be applied more extensively to psycho-analysis, so revealing the congruity between the child and the savage and, not co-incidentally, the neurotic:

> "In dreams and in neuroses," so our thesis has run, "we come once more upon the *child* and the peculiarities which characterize his modes of thought and his emotional life." "And we come upon the *savage* too," we may now add, "upon the *primitive* man, as he stands revealed to us in the light of the researches of archaeology and of ethnology" (Freud, 1979a: 223).

Behind all these images lies the notion that the savage's intellectual and emotional development is arrested in a permanent childhood. At the same time, children were regarded by many anthropologists, psychologists and other scientists as atavisms, living examples of past modes of feeling and living.

Herbert Spencer's essays on education and "On Progress" of the late 1850's make this point forcibly. Spencer sees in the physiognomy of children a repetition of the savage:

> The infant European has sundry marked points of resemblance to the lower human races; as in the flatness of the alæ of the nose, the depression of its bridge, the divergence and forward opening of the nostrils, the form of the lips, the absence of a frontal sinus, the width between the eyes, the smallness of the legs (Spencer, 1906: 160-161).

The precision of the details, the apparently objective nature of the scientific terms, fail to conceal that Spencer's comparison is rooted, not in fact, but firmly in his own imagination. In "On Moral Education" (1858), Spencer employs a similar description to argue for the inherent viciousness of children: so far as children resemble savages physically, so far also do

they resemble their immorality:

> Do not expect from a child any great amount of moral goodness. During early years every civilised man passes through that phase of character exhibited by the barbarous race from which he is descended. As the child's features - flat nose, forward-opening nostrils, large lips, wide-apart eyes, absent frontal sinus, etc.- resemble for a time those of the savage, so, too, do his instincts. Hence the tendencies to cruelty, to thieving, to lying, so general among children - tendencies which, even without the aid of discipline, will become more or less modified just as the features do. The popular idea that children are "innocent," while it is true with respect to evil *knowledge*, is totally false with respect to evil *impulses*; as half an hour's observation in the nursery will prove to any one. Boys when left to themselves, as at public schools, treat each other more brutally than men do; and were they left to themselves at an earlier age their brutality would be still more conspicuous (Spencer, 1906: 108-9).

These recapitulatory images reveal something of the underlying assumptions about the nature of children and savages. The comparison suggests that children are archaic creatures living within modern industrial society. Writers have often observed the conservative nature of children, in so far as they retain customs and perceptions that are no longer viable or acceptable among adult society. For instance, when fairy tales were no longer current among adults, they were passed down, until they became viewed as the natural property of children. Indeed, in the nineteenth century, the connection of fairy tales with a remote and savage past strengthened the idea that this made them particularly suitable for children. Savages, like children, were deemed to retain ancient customs and tales, and the habits of children were likewise depicted as survivals of a savage way of life. Here is Edward Tylor discussing children playing at "bows and arrows":

> As games thus keep up the record of primitive warlike arts, so they reproduce, in what are at once sports and little children's lessons, early stages in the history of childlike tribes of mankind (Tylor, 1871, 1: 66).

This contact with the primitive guaranteed the child's imagined visionary sense. Children and savages were supposed to possess a unity that was unattainable for modern man. Edward Carpenter affirmed in *Civilization, Its Cause and Cure* (London: 1889) that modern society was fragmented and incomplete, and could only be unified by a return to savage culture. In the early twentieth century, Lévy-Bruhl developed a thesis which apparently confirmed the popular belief that savages retained a unity of vision. Lévy-Bruhl argued that savages, like children, think pre-logically. They do not analyse and isolate a phenomenon, but rather "participate" in all their subjective and objective experience. This prevents them from making distinctions between what is logically unrelated, and creates a rapt, visionary perception of the world.

However, if children were savages then they were also foreign, and alien to the civilised adult. It began to seem that the nature of our perceptions, and hence our image of the world, alters so fundamentally between childhood and maturity, that it is beyond the power of our adult imaginations to recall the world of childhood - hence Freud's lament that we have grown estranged from our childhood. It is this sense of the alienness of childhood, and the fear and disgust that this aroused in some men that are most fully revealed in the works of degeneracy theory.

The roots of degeneracy theory lie perhaps in the earlier pseudo-science of phrenology. Both express a view, again an old and popular one, that a person's character is revealed in their external appearance. Whereas phrenology examined character through measuring bumps on the head, degeneracy theory began by asserting that an individual's intellectual capacity was discernible in the shape and capacity of an individual's skull. Later,

degenerationists would declare that certain physical "stigmata", such as pointed ears, low forehead, too narrow a gap between thumb and finger, marked out the atavistic personality of the degenerate.

Degeneracy theory argued that in some creatures development may be arrested at an early stage, or that a creature advanced in phylogenetic development might lose some of its more advanced characteristics during its ontogenetic development. In other words, evolution need not mean advance; animals were as likely to evolve backwards as forwards. The American biologist Edward Drinker Cope (1840-1879) employed Lamarck's theory of acquired characteristics, to produce his own theory of "acceleration" and "retardation":

> The superimposition of characters which constitutes evolution, means that more numerous characters are possessed by the higher than the lower types. This involves a greater number of changes during the ontogenetic growth of each individual of the higher type. In other words, characters acquired during the phylogenetic history are continually assumed by the progressive form at earlier and earlier periods of life. This process has been metaphorically termed by Professor Alpheus Hyatt and myself "acceleration." All progressive organic evolution is by acceleration, as here described. Retrogressive evolution may be accomplished by a retardation in the rate of growth of the taxonomic characters, so that instead of adding, and accumulating them, those already possessed are gradually dropped; the adults repeating in a reverse order the progressive series, and approaching more and more the primitive embryonic stages. This process I have termed "retardation" (Cope, 1896: 201).

Degeneracy takes this biological theory and applies it to human individuals. Degenerates were retarded individuals, victims of arrested development, stuck at a lower evolutionary level than normal humanity. Max Nordau (1849-1923) gives the degenerationist view in his *Degeneration* (1892):

> The disease of degeneracy consists precisely in the fact that the degenerate organism has not the power to mount to the height of evolution already

> attained by the species, but stops on the way at an earlier or later point. The relapse of the degenerate may reach to the most stupendous depth. As, in reverting to the cleavage of the superior maxillary peculiar to insects with sextuple lips, he sinks somatically to the level of fishes, nay to that of the arthropoda, or even further to that of rhizopods not yet sexually differentiated; as by fistulæ of the neck he reverts to the branchiæ of the lowest fishes, the selacious; or by excess in the number of fingers (polydactylia) to the multiple-rayed fins of fishes, perhaps even to the bristles of worms; or, by hermaphrodism, to the asexuality of rhizopods - so in the most favourable cases, as a higher degenerate, he renews intellectually the type of the primitive man of the most remote Stone Age; or, in the worst case, as an idiot, that of an animal far anterior to man (Nordau, 1895: 556).

The influence of degeneracy theory was at its strongest in Britain and America from the 1880's until the start of the First World War. Like many theories that stress heredity as the determining factor in human behaviour, degeneracy was implicitly reactionary (although it appealed as much to "progressive" figures such as H.G. Wells, as to conservative types such as Nordau). Criminals and lunatics were born and not made, and therefore they were beyond the influence of reform. As George Bernard Shaw remarks in *The Sanity of Art* (1895), almost anything could be taken as a sign of degeneracy:

> He [Nordau] is so utterly mad on the subject of degeneration that he finds the symptoms of it in the loftiest geniuses as plainly as in the lowest jailbirds, the exceptions being himself, Lombroso, Krafft-Ebing, Dr. Maudsley, Goethe, Shakespear, and Beethoven [...] If a man's senses are acute, he is degenerate, hyper-æsthesia having been observed in asylums. If they are dull, he is degenerate, anæsthesia being the stigma of the craziness which makes old women confess to witchcraft. If he is particular as to what he wears, he is degenerate: silk dressing-gowns and knee-breeches are grave symptoms, and woolen shirts conclusive. If he is negligent in these matters, clearly he is inattentive and therefore degenerate. If he drinks, he is neurotic; if he is a vegetarian and teetotaller, let him be locked up at once. If he lives an evil life, that fact condemns him without further words: if on the other hand his conduct is irreproachable, he is a wretched "mattoid", incapable of the will and courage to realise his vicious propensities in action (Shaw, 1908: 89-90).

Degeneracy judged all human behaviour by a narrow standard, that of the white, adult,

middle-class Western male. At its root lies the fear of the marginal and the unknown, and a single, tacit norm of intelligence, behaviour and beauty which individuals either attain or fall below. In a text-book on educational practice, G.E. Shuttleworth, a Medical Superintendent at an asylum, places photographs of 'degenerate' children before and after receiving treatment. The only difference between the two photographs is that the "cured" have been allowed the dignity of clothes. Their prior nakedness is the contrived evidence of their unsocial savagery (Shuttleworth, 1895: 69).

Through its basis in recapitulation, degeneracy theory marks out mental defectives as atavistic. Here Binet and Simon quote Esquirol:

> "Idiocy begins either with life, or during that period which precedes the complete development of the affective and intellectual faculties; idiots are what they must remain during the entire course of their lives. Everything in the idiot reveals an organism of arrested or of imperfect development" (Binet and Simon, 1916: 16).

For this reason individuals with Down's Syndrome were termed "mongoloids", as they were considerd as atavisms at the evolutionary level of the Mongolian race.

Just as degenerates were children, so some children were especially degenerate. Dr. Nathan Oppenheim, an American physician, argued that as the child's nervous system was still in a process of development "pathological action is easy of occurence" as the cells are naturally unstable (Oppenheim, 1898: 209). This leaves the child especially vulnerable to "morbid influences", and hence to an interruption or reversion in the process of development. Belief in the child's tendency to degenerate was prevalent in the 1890's and 1900's. In his popular study *Degeneracy. Its Causes, Signs, and Results* (1898), Eugene S. Talbot details the marks of such extreme degeneracy in children. After a difficult infancy, marked by

"irritability, apprehension, strange ideas" (page 154), the unfortunate degenerate grows into an asocial dreamer:

> Invention, poetry, music, artistic taste, philantrophy, intensity, and originality, are sometimes of a higher order among these persons, but desultory, half-finished work, and shiftlessness are more common. With many of them concentrated, sustained effort, and attempts to keep them to it are impossible. Their commonsense perception of the relations of life, executive or business faculty and judgment are seldom well-developed. The memory is now and then extraordinary. They are apt to be self-conscious, egotistic, and morbidly conscious. They easily become victims of insomnia, neurasthenia, hypochondria, neuroticism, hysteria, or insanity. They offend against the proprieties of life and commit crime with less cause or provocation than other persons. While many of them are among the most gifted and attractive members of the community, the majority are otherwise, and possess an uncommon capacity for making fools of themselves, and of being a nuisance to their friends and of little use in the world (Talbot, 1898: 155).

As is often the case in the writings of degenerationists, here it appears that behind these remarks lies suspicion, envy, and contempt for the eccentric and artistic. There is also the suspicion that the child is antagonistic to the values of industrial society, that its interests are selfish, not social. It is apparent that the degenerationists accused and condemned childhood as such for occupying a position on the margins of political society. Hence other anti-social groups, particularly the neurotic and criminal could be represented as if they were children, simply due to the accident of possessing the same imaginative territory of the margin.

This process appears most clearly in the image of the criminal. From its inception the degeneracy theorists had been fascinated by the criminal. Cesare Lombroso (1836-1909), the Italian criminal anthropologist, was the most notable exponent of degeneracy theory. He considered criminals to be atavistic, modern people stuck in humanity's origins in savagery, for instance, describing the tendency of criminals to tattoo themselves as a vestige of savage

behaviour. Criminals were also atavistic insomuch as they were perpetual children. In *The Criminal* (1890), his study of Lombroso and criminal anthropology, Havelock Ellis (1859-1939) moves with ease from stating that some children have criminal tendencies to asserting that *all* children are, in their very nature, criminal:

> It is a very significant fact that these characters [i.e. the exceptional child criminal] are but an exaggeration of the characters which in a less degree mark nearly all children. The child is naturally, by his organisation, nearer to the animal, to the savage, to the criminal than the adult (Ellis, 1890: 212).

Lombroso similarly indicates the criminal tendencies of children:

> You know that one of the most important discoveries of my school is that in the child up to a certain age are manifested the saddest tendencies of the criminal man. The germs of delinquency and criminality are found normally ever in the first periods of human life [...] At the age of a year it goes so far in its anger as to strike people ... precisely as savages do (Lombroso, 1895-6: 53).

Lombroso goes on to note the criminal characteristics of children: impatience, rage, deceit, obstinacy, amorality, cruelty, megalomania, excessive vanity, and drunkenness. The criminal is merely someone unable to mature, or evolve beyond this primitive stage. Lombroso describes how most people undergo during adolescence a "genuine ethical revolution corresponding to the physical condition" (Lombroso, 1895-6: 56):

> But in some unfortunates this evolution does not take place, just as in physical monsters there is arrest of physical development or of foetal evolution, and then the criminal tendencies become more marked than in the majority of youths, often breaking out in terrible atrocities and obscenities, and persisting ever after (Lombroso, 1895-6: 56).

It is apparent that it is the child's instinctual nature that makes it "criminal" in the eyes of the leading psychologists and anthropologists of the day. Stanley Hall sees both the child and

the criminal as creatures that are over-passionate: "Criminals are much like over-grown children .. and our passions tend to bring us to childish stages" (Hall, 1904, 1: 338). Havelock Ellis suggests that the child is prey to every emotion and impulse:

> The child lives in the present; the emotion or the desire of the moment is large enough to blot out for him the whole world; he has no foresight, and is the easier given up to his instincts and passions; our passions, as Hobbes said, bring us nearer to children. Children are naturally egoists; they will commit all enormities, sometimes, to enlarge their eogistic satisfaction. They are cruel and inflict suffering on animals out of curiosity, enjoying the manifestations of pain. They are thieves for the gratification of their appetites, especially the chief, gluttony, and they are unscupulous and often cunning liars, not hesitating to put the blame on the innocent when their misdeeds are discovered. The charm of childhood for those who are not children lies largely in those qualities of frank egotism and reckless obedience to impulse (Ellis, 1890: 212).

Therefore, the degenerate, the perpetual child, may be distinguished by his excessive sensibility, living life at too great a peak of intensity. Max Nordau writes:

> Another mental stigma of degenerates is their emotionalism. Morel has even wished to make this peculiarity their chief characteristic - erroneously, it seems to me, for it is present in the same degree among hysterics, and, indeed, is to be found in perfectly healthy persons, who, from any transient cause, such as illness, exhaustion, or any mental shock, have been temporarily weakened. Nevertheless it is a phenomenon rarely absent in a degenerate. He laughs until he sheds tears or weeps copiously without adequate occasion; a commonplace line of poetry or prose sends a shudder down his back; he falls into raptures before indifferent pictures or statues; and music especially, even the most insipid and least commendable, arouses in him the most vehement emotions [...] His excitability appears to him a mark of superiority; he believes himself to be possessed by a peculiar insight lacking in other mortals, and he is fain to despise the vulgar herd for the dulness and narrowness of their minds. The unhappy creature does not suspect that he is conceited about a disease and boasting of a derangement of the mind ... (Nordau, 1895: 19).

In *"Civilized" Sexual Morality* (1908), Freud probably has this in mind when he describes how the instinctual child, and the adult too unyielding to suppress his childhood instincts

come to be called a "'criminal'", or an "'outlaw'" (Freud, 1959: 187). Certainly there are indications that in "Analysis of a Phobia in a Five-Year-Old Boy" ("Little Hans") Freud wished to protect the polymorphously perverse child from charges of degeneracy, whilst at the same time playing on the idea that Hans is a "criminal":

> I must return to the objection [...] according to which Hans was a neurotic, a "degenerate" with a bad heredity, and not a normal child, knowledge about whom could be applied to other children [...] Hans was not a degenerate child, condemned by his heredity to be a neurotic. On the contrary, he was well formed physically, and was a cheerful, amiable active-minded young fellow (Freud, 1955: 141-142).

Like the criminal, the neurotic was also seen as atavistic, closer by virtue of his degeneracy to the origins of the human race. In his *The Pathology of Mind* (1879), the influential British psychologist Henry Maudsley created a evolutionist theory of mental illness, placing the mentally ill on a level with lower organisms and savages. Freud, himself, inherited the notion that the mental life of savages and neurotics are all but identical:

> ... *the psychical impulses of primitive people were characterized by a higher amount of ambivalence than is to be found in modern civilized man. It is to be supposed that as this ambivalence diminished, taboo (a symptom of the ambivalence and a compromise between the two conflicting impulses) slowly disappeared.* Neurotics, who are obliged to repeat the struggle and the taboo resulting from it, may be said to have inherited an archaic constitution as an atavistic vestige; the need to compensate for this at the behest of civilization is what drives them to their immense expenditure of mental energy (Freud, 1957: 66).

Inevitably, due to their atavistic, savage nature close to the origins of humanity, neurotics were described as children, and even treated as such. Eugene S. Talbot even sees a physical resemblance between the neurotic and the child:

> The youthful appearance may be due largely to arrested facial development at an early age, the face thus retaining the child character throughout life.

> Considering, therefore, this class of neurotics, which does not include those afflicted with the more serious nervous disorders such as epilepsy, they may be looked upon as the victims of evolutionary processes that are constantly going on in the race and under civilised conditions (Talbot, 1898: 334).

This discourse would seem to relate to the way in which the mentally ill were reduced to the status of children - their sexual activity restricted, deprived of their vote, their liberty, and their right to act on their own responsibility. It is possible that in representing the mentally ill as children lay not only a way of denying insanity or neurosis as a part of adult experience, but also a means of expressing otherwise inexpressible unease about the nature of children.

These fears of degeneracy in childhood and adolescence led to a series of social practices by which degeneracy might be cured. In most cases, the treatment was one in which the child was innoculated against the "savagery" of degeneracy by experiencing their "savage" instincts in controlled circumstances. Among these cures can be listed: the numerous scouting organisations created in Europe and America in the period following the close of the American frontier, the development of nature study and recapitulatory methods of education (often influenced by the pedagogy of G.S. Hall), the growth of the kindergarten movement, the rise of garden cities and school gardening following the "recruiting crisis" of 1902-4, and the "back to nature" treatment of delinquent children. To this we may tentatively add the practice of psychoanalysis, in which, among other things, the civilised adult encounters and lives through his or her own propensity to "savagery", present in childhood and neurosis.

These cultural practices may seem far removed from the representation of the feral child. However, they depend upon a connection between childhood and "savagery", and are, before everything, concerned with the creation of rituals through which the pre-political and

asocial "savagery" of children can responsibly enter the social world. In this way, they repeat a narrative of social origins central to the feral child. That this narrative is recast in domesticated terms indicates something of the ways in which the representation of the feral child, and of the child as "savage", changes in the course of the several hundred years with which this thesis has been concerned.

In *The Conquest of America*, Todorov writes of the interdependence of alterity and semiotics:

> Language exists only by means of the other, not only because one always addresses someone but also insofar as it permits evoking the absent third person; unlike animals, men know citation. But the very existence of this other is measured by the space the symbolic system reserves for him: such space is not the same, to evoke only one massive and by now familiar example, before and after the advent of writing (in the narrow sense). So that any investigation of alterity is necessarily semiotic, and reciprocally, semiotics cannot be conceived outside the relation to the other (Todorov, 1984: 157).

The representation of the feral child demonstrates how such individuals were placed in a system of signs which drew upon established models of understanding, for instance: the myth of Romulus and Remus; the form of romance; the drama of reclamation; the exhibition of the person; the idea of the state of nature; the encounter with the "savage"; the narrative of recapitulation; the loss of self in somnambulism.

Transformations in the representation of the feral child may result from broader

cultural shifts regarding the semiotic image of childhood as such. The move towards a more child-oriented family that is supposed to have occurred over this period may have been paralleled in the greater interest in stories of feral children. The representation of the "savage" is perhaps more static: changes here may reflect the spread of Empire and the influence of Darwinism. These forces are certainly present in the later image of feral children, as this chapter has shown.

If a movement is to be detected through the analysis of these case histories and fictions, then it is one which happens complexly and confusedly. It might be said that between the early modern romances of the abandoned child and the writings of Freud there has been a move inwards. In this sense, the history of the feral child perhaps expresses the desacralization of the world. This may be too simple a formula. Ideas of interiority and exteriority are found in early and later writings, although formulated in different ways, as for example in the allied interest in an internal human essence in ideas of the soul and in psychoanalysis.

Similarly, early modern romance linked the child to the civilised world through processes of mystery, wonder, and reverence. These processes had their political elements, as the reading of the "wild man" entertainments shows. Yet, the mythic elements in Kipling and Burroughs are strikingly close to these romances, although tinged now with an underlying narrative of Darwinian development. This may be because the social realm itself had by the close of the nineteenth century increasingly taken on the characteristics of nature. Racial theory, social Darwinism, eugenics, and the ideologies of Empire all fostered an environment in which the political realm bore many of the features of the state of nature. In such a political

world the feral child's relation is necessarily different to that imagined by the early modern writers. Society is no longer the artifice which fulfills human nature. It has become an embodiment of a dark struggle based upon species and hereditarian difference. This world does not distinguish itself so readily from its static opposite, the human without culture. The human being as animal has already been written in to the ideological structure.

The replacement of the artificial society by a society that increasingly imitated the state of nature was complicated by the rise of mass experience and industrialisation. By the time of Kipling's writings the only options available to the savage child are absolute conformity or a tainted escape. The sense of wonder found in the writings on Memmie Le Blanc, Victor, and Kaspar Hauser are still present in Kipling and Freud, but in a greatly muted form. The commodification of the person glimpsed in the early cases is complete by the later writings. The exhibition of the self in the case of Peter the Wild Boy and Memmie Le Blanc becomes the mass production of the "savage" experience, as found in the rapid growth of scouting (with its heavy indebtedness to Kipling in Britain, and to G.S. Hall in the U.S.A.).

The earlier romances and the pamphlets on Peter imagine a world which places the feral and abandoned child in the same temporal and spatial order as itself - although in the case of the romances this is a temporal order defined by its ahistoricality. These children share the world, simply exemplifying an alternative (and, sometimes, debased) mode of experience. This begins to change with the advent of Hobbes and Locke and their theorisation of the state of nature. The world is divided in terms of historicality. There are those who belong to a largely fictional state of nature and there are those who occupy the world of political and social life. The first precedes the second, though the civilised may at

any time return by revolution to the condition of the state of nature. The feral child becomes identified with the preceding state, a state which in human terms stands for an essential human nature. The feral child embodies silence over words, solitude over society, and passion over reason. Following Rousseau, the feral child can therefore symbolise a lost personal authenticity, an imagined self prior to that which has grown within the social and the historical. He or she retains the darkness and the clarity of our origins, besides which the civilised observer may feel estranged. The representation of the feral child therefore expresses our exile from nature. (It may be the sense that the child therefore presents the antithesis of bourgeois culture which accounts for his identification with the aristocrat).

The texts examined do suggest that one tendency witnessed in the history of the feral child is that the experience of childhood "savagery" is increasingly dispersed (it becomes everyone's experience) and internalised (it becomes everyone's psychological history). The scouting ritual may uncannily resemble the "wild man" entertainments, but their meaning is certainly different. The actor who plays the "wild man" expresses nothing about himself. He plays the part of a creature who occupies a certain position in the system of signs, in order to reinforce the authority of that system. The boy or girl scout who pretends to be an Indian or a member of Akela's wolf-pack does much the same. However, in psychological terms they are also supposedly acting out an essential truth about themselves, manifesting in an adult-directed ritual their supposed "savagery", their momentary position on the recapitulatory scale.

The feral child may symbolise an original self, but it does so by actually existing in the here and now. Rather than an origin distanced by time it occupies the same temporality as

its civilised observers. Like the "savage" (whether "Red Indian", "Negro", or South Sea Islander) he represents either a degenerate or an essential version of the self. He is an anachronism, a hesitation of history. Therefore, like the "savage", he can be used to criticise civilised society. In Itard, this may take the form of self-criticism, the civilised questioning its own right to interfere with the natural. However, if anything is apparent from this thesis it is the increasing importance of the idea of race as a mode of understanding the world.

What these movements share is a process by which the feral child is transplanted from a spatial relation (the "wild man" in the forest) into a temporal one. The "other" is not lost thereby. It is incorporated into the self, absorbed into the unconscious of the adult human being. Partly, this is the outcome of the Enlightenment project which sought to describe a universal human nature - though this project was eventually distorted into one which enumerated human differences on the level of race.

The experience of the feral child therefore replays the encounter of the civilised with the "savage". This meeting with "otherness" is one in which the shock of recognition plays as great a part as the overpowering awareness of difference. This appears in the representation of the feral child who is often "one of us" in so far as he or she appears in a European culture, and yet does not share our culture. It is the perceived lack of culture which places the feral child within the same terms of reference as the "savage".

This encounter depends upon the pathos produced when power encounters the absolutely vulnerable and weak individual. Hannah Arendt has written of the experience of fear and humiliation felt by the "civilised" at the sight of the "savage" (Arendt, 1979: 192).

In Itard's case history we can see most clearly a movement between contempt and

envy in the representation of the feral child. The child can momentarily symbolise something better than oneself. This creates a desire to imaginatively possess the experience of the child. However, this reaching out of sympathy encounters also a resistance, in which desire becomes contempt, through a recognition of the feral child's rawness, brutality, and bestiality, in short, their "savagery". This leads the observer to erect barriers to the recognition of kinship. In its most extreme form, this denial of identity with the child enters into the apparently abstract question of the definition of humanity. In this way, the writers and observers of the feral child deny the most obvious evidence of humanity, that is, the evidence of the eyes that fail to recognise a shared human shape. This psychological process forms the background for much of the writing on feral children discussed in this thesis. The civilised adult discovers a symbol of his or her desire to escape the human condition through a return to the "origin" of childhood and the primitive, but also fears and rejects that "origin" for its existence threatens to unravel the fragile unity of the self.

In this way, the representation of the feral child exists in the faultline between disgust and desire. He or she embodies our desire for escape, freedom, and wonder. Yet he or she also evokes the disgust felt for the merely corporeal, the wholly material and physical aspects of life, the disgust for that which has no self, no love, and no remorse. Desire seeks escape to the position of another. Disgust reconsitutes that escape as a return to the most torpid, gross, and inescapable aspects of the self.

These processes are expressions of the ambivalent desire to appropriate or recoil from the nature of the "other". Todorov is perhaps the clearest critic of that relation:

> Either he conceives the Indians (though without using these words) as human

> beings altogether, having the same rights as himself; but then he sees them not only as equals but also as identical, and this behavior leads to assimilationism, the projection of his own values on the others. Or else he starts from the difference, but the latter is immediately translated into terms of superiority and inferiority (in his [Columbus's] case, obviously, it is the Indians who are inferior). What is denied is the existence of a human substance truly other, sometimes capable of being not merely an imperfect state of oneself. These two elementary figures of the experience of alterity are both grounded in egocentrism, in the identification of our own values in general, of our *I* with the universe - in the conviction that the world is one (Todorov, 1984: 42-3).

It may be that this thesis rehearses the history of precisely this egocentric movement between extremes, although the influence of primitivism is strong enough to present these particular "others" as superiour on occasion. However, it also seems that in dealing with these texts the writers were engaged in, and recorded, an attempt to recognise the "other" as other. Of interest here is the way in which the Hauser story connects to the history of nineteenth-century psychology, with its breaking up of the rigid ego through an interest in alterations and fragmentations of personality. The possibility of alterity *within* the self may ease the recognition of the difference of others. Perhaps, Freud's endeavour to draw into the "normal" human sphere the experience of the "savage" known in childhood and in neurosis can be connected to this adjustment in the knowledge of others. The self's strangeness accommodates a world of unknown things. The end of the "Enlightenment ideology" that described a universal human nature that may be known by a disinterested mind might be prefigured in the Enlightenment project of understanding and civilising the feral child. Here we perhaps witness the failure of the Enlightenment to comprehend that universality when drawn up against the exemplar of its essential nature.

What complicates that essential nature is its silence. What does it mean to be without

words? For Lyly's audience it equalled invisibility: the "wild man" comes out of a wood that has concealed him from the eyes of others. There he experiences the absence of relatedness. Curiously, considering the fact that one pre-dominant theme of these representations is the attempt to understand the other, it is precisely the fact that the feral child exists without others which draws our desire or our disgust. The texts sometimes yearn for, and sometimes fear, absolute solitude. Yet, their very nature is concerned with the ending of solitude, with the drawing in of the other into a relation with the self. Envying their separation, and hoping to end it, to intrude upon it, to restore it to a human world, the observer of the feral child is placed in an impossible situation. They long for solitude, but also offer a testament to the necessity and beauty of human relationships, the passion for care, the education of another, the taking of responsibility for them. In this way we return to the exemplary figure of Itard, working patiently to grant the child the gift of language, and still bearing witness to his human silence.

ENDNOTES

ENDNOTES TO INTRODUCTION:

1. Robert Kerr, a figure of the later Scottish Enlightenment, also translated works by Lavoisier and Cuvier, as well as Buffon's natural history of oviparous quadrupeds and serpents. He was the editor of an eighteen volume collection of voyages and travels (Edinburgh and London: 1811-24), and translated and wrote works on the chemistry of bleaching.

2. See Phillipus Camerarius, *Operae Horarum Subcisivarum, sive Meditationes Historicæ* (Frankfurt: Petri Kopffij, 1609) and Nicolaus Tulpius, *Observationes Medicæ* (Amsterdam: Daniel Elzevir, 1671: 296-298). Camerarius's work was translated by John Molle as *The Walking Librarie, or Meditations and Observations Historical, Natural, Moral, Political, and Poetical* (London: Adam Islip, 1621).

3. This is available in English translation in *The Anthropological Treatises of Johann Friedrich Blumenbach* (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, & Green, 1865). Blumenbach's work was translated by Thomas Bendyshe.

ENDNOTES TO CHAPTER ONE:

1. In *Les Origines de Rome* (Brussells: Facultés Universitaires Saint Louis, 1985), Jacques Poucet alludes with an air of embarrassment to the archetypal meanings of the foundation narrative:

> Ces motifs semblent surgir d'une espèce de fonds communs de l'humanité. Serions-nous en présence de "l'inconscient collectif" jungien? C'est possible (182).

2. The feral child's position on the boundary between the human and the animal is best witnessed at this moment: that is, as a small infant sucking at the teats of a female animal: "but he offered the Child to her Dugs, whom she, without Reluctance, nay, with a visible Tenderness, suffer'd to draw her Milk, and endeavoured, tho' too straitly muzzled, to caress it with her Velvet Tongue" (*Most Wonderful Wonder*, 1726: 5). An illustration in Bernard Connor's *History of Poland* shows a similar image: a strong male infant suckling from a bear. The image figures in the drawings on the title page of *An Enquiry How the Wild Youth* - like *The Most Wonderful Wonder*, a pamphlet of 1726 devoted to the case of Peter the Wild Boy. Later it reappeared in an illustration to Thomas Day's *Little Jack* (London: 1788), a children's book which describes the exploits of a boy suckled by a she-goat, where Jack is depicted lying on the ground feeding his "mother's" udder.

The moment is of importance for several reasons. Firstly, it demonstrates in starkly visual terms that the child has crossed a boundary. Secondly, it places him or her in the maternal care of an animal - which may be assumed to stand symbolically for the image of him as a favoured and privileged child of nature, provided for and hence saved when solitary death might be thought to be the most likely fate. The child's salvation opens up the possibility of an order in nature, and a beneficial relationship between humans and animals now lost: it is one feature of the transgression of the image, that only the child is privileged by this act of maternal love - other humans remain instinctive enemies, and indeed often become enemies to the child, who invariably evades capture and is seen as attempting to remain at one with his or her new animal family.

3. See Timothy Husband, *The Wild Man: Medieval Myth and Symbolism* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1980) for a useful collection of images of the "wild man". The most significant of the many discussions of the "wild man" remain Robert Bernheimer, *Wild Men in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1952) and Edward Dudley and Maximilian Novak (eds), *The Wild Man Within: An Image in Western Thought from the Renaissance to Romanticism* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press).

4. See "The Speeches and Honorable Entertainment Giuen to the Qveenes Maiestie in Progresse, at Cowdrey in Sussex, by the right Honorable the Lord Montacute" (1591) (Lyly, 1902, 1: 421-30) and "Speeches Delivered to Her Maiestie This Last Progresse, at the Right Honorable the Lady Rvssels at Bissam, the Right Honorable the Lorde Chandos at Sudley, at the Right Honorable the Lord Norris, at Ricorte" (1592) (*op cit*: 471-90).

5. It may be significant that the role of the "wild man" diminishes towards the end of Elizabeth's reign. Though "wild men" do appear in masques, their relationship to

civilisation through the image of virginity and royalty combined in Elizabeth naturally ceases to possess great social importance following the accession of James I.

ENDNOTES TO CHAPTER TWO:

1.Of the seven pamphlets only one can be ascribed with any conviction to a known author. This is *Mere Nature Delineated: or, A Body without a Soul* (London:1726), which is almost certainly by Daniel Defoe, the text having survived unscathed from the welcome re-formation of the Defoe canon brought about by the work of P.N.Furbank and W.R. Owens. See P.N. Furbank and W.R. Owens, *The Canonisation of Daniel Defoe* (New Haven and London: The Yale University Press, 1988) and their later work, *Defoe De-Attributions. A Critique of J.R. Moore's Checklist* (London and Rio Grande: The Hambledon Press, 1994).

2. The critical literature on these texts centres on two discussions by Maximilian Novak: in *Defoe and the Nature of Man* (Oxford: 1963) and an essay, "The Wild Man Comes to Tea" in Dudley and Novak (eds), *The Wild Man Within* (*op cit*). The first considers Defoe in relation to ideas of natural law, and the second lays out the relation of Peter the Wild Boy to a number of texts in the period, including the various late seventeenth-century and early eighteenth-century translations of the story of Hai ibn Yokdhan and John Kirkby's *Automathes* (London: 1745), both of which describe how a child isolated from infancy nonetheless comes to a belief in the existence of God. Novak's treatment of these texts is sufficiently in depth to preclude their inclusion here. However, his convincing reading of the pamphlets on Peter falls short of being a full treatment of their implications and meanings.

3. *The Most Wonderful Wonder*, *It Cannot Rain*, *The Manifesto of Lord Peter*, and *The Devil to Pay* have all been attributed at various times to Arbuthnot. *The Most Wonderful Wonder* (which ran to two editions in 1726), appeared an edition of Arbuthnot's *Miscellaneous Works* (1741) along with *It Cannot Rain*, which may give some veracity to the claim to his authorship. The attributions of *The Manifesto of Lord Peter* and *The Devil to Pay* to Arbuthnot both belong to the *Miscellaneous Works* of 1751, a notoriously unreliable edition, and therefore it is highly unlikely that these works are by Arbuthnot. The fiercest disputes are over *It Cannot Rain but it Pours*. Walter Scott thought this text one of the few works by Swift included in Arbuthnot's *Miscellanies*. However, the *Miscellanies* (1741) mentions only Arbuthnot as author.

Defoe's assumption that Swift was the author of the texts, and his specific denial that Arbuthnot was the author (Defoe, 1726b: 117-8), are unfortunately not conclusive evidence for Swift's authorship. Defoe's attribution, like that of the author of *The Manifesto of Lord Peter*, most likely stems from the naming in both *The Most Wonderful Wonder* and *It Cannot Rain but it Pours* of "The Copper Farthing Dean". This is an unmistakable reference to Swift's involvement in the debate over Wood's halfpence. Similarly, the naming of Peter as "Lord Peter" in *The Manifesto of Lord Peter* is an obvious reference to Swift's *A Tale of a Tub*.

4. The word "mere" (also spelt "meer") was a favourite of Defoe's. In the 1720's it retained its early modern sense of "complete". J. Donald Crowley glosses "my meer fate" as completely my fate in his edition of *Robinson Crusoe* (Oxford, 1983: 310). In

Robinson Crusoe, Crusoe describes himself as behaving "like a meer brute from the principles of Nature, and by the dictates of common sense only, and indeed hardly that" (1983: 88). The connection of the word to an unregenerate and sinful naturalness occurs elsewhere in the text: for instance, Crusoe is "reduced to a meer State of Nature ..." (1983: 118).

5. See Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (London: Weidenfield & Nicholson, 1971) and Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down* (London: Maurice Temple Smith, 1972) and *Milton and the English Revolution* (London: Faber, 1977).

6. In *The Canonisation of Daniel Defoe* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988), P.N. Furband and W.R. Owens point out that the attribution of this text to Defoe has been disputed by Rodney Baine in his *Daniel Defoe and the Supernatural* (1968).

7.Novak (*op. cit.*) has argued that this may be Defoe's rebuttal of the earlier feral child text, Abu Bakr Ibn Al-Ṫufail's medieval text, *The Improvement of Reason, exhibited in the life of Hai Ebn Yokdan* (trans. Simon Ockley) (London: 1708). In this book, Hai Ibn Yokdan comes to a knowledge of God purely through the exercise of his own isolated reason.

8. Carol Houlihan Flynn, *The Body in Swift and Defoe* (Cambridge University Press, 1990) offers a revealing account of the uses of the body in the writings of Swift and Defoe. Although her work does not mention Peter the Wild Boy, some of her conclusions are suggestive in connection to my own. She is partly concerned with the anxiety produced by the bodies of the poor and of women, themes which, as I will go on to show, are also present in the representation of Peter.

9. Hannah Arendt makes a similar connection in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951) (San Diego, New York and London: 1979)..

10. The account of Peter drawn from the Parish Register of the church in which he was buried, and reprinted in *The Annual Register, 1784-5*, has this to say on Peter's musicality:

> He had a natural ear for music, and was so delighted with it, that, if he heard any musical instrument played upon, he would immediately dance and caper about till he was almost quite exhausted with fatigue: and though he could never be taught the distinct utterance of any word, yet he could easily learn to hum a tune (*Peter the Wild Boy*, 1787: 44).

Francesca Cuzzoni, a singer from Rome, had made her debut in Handel's *Ottone* in the season of 1722-3 at the Theatre in the Hay-Market, in London. Cuzzoni's debut was an incredible triumph: tickets for the second night changed hands at six times their original value. In 1726, the company engaged a second *prima donna*, Faustina Bordoni. She made her London debut in Handel's *Alessandro* on 5 May. Bordoni and Cuzzoni were old rivals from the opera in Venice: Bordoni's arrival in London precipitated a revival of their emnity. There was much partisan support from members of the fashionable audience, who became supporters of "*Faustina* or *Cuzzoni*, *Handel* or *Bonocini*" (*Devil*

to Pay, 3). The difference between the supporters of Cuzzoni or Faustina "increased to a more violent degree of enmity than even the theological and political parties of high church and low, or Whig and Tory, which then raged in this country" (Burney, 1789, 4: 309). On 10 June 1727, at the last night of Bononcini's *Astyanax*, the performance of the two singers was interrupted by cat-calls and clapping, despite the presence of the Princess Caroline. Handel coped with the situation by writing operas for two heroines, in which each *prima donna* was granted an equal number of arias, a duet with the hero, and a share of leading musical lines in the finale. Faustina went on to marry the composer Hasse, and enjoyed European fame until her retirement from the stage in 1751. Cuzzoni's later career was dogged by misfortune, profligacy, and poverty. She died as a button-maker in Bologna in 1770.

11. Defoe may have had a special interest in the deaf. At the time of writing the text on Peter, Defoe's daughter, Sophy, was due to marry Henry Baker, a teacher of the deaf. Defoe commends Baker's work in his text (1726b:39-40) - which in itself might also act as evidence linking the text to Defoe. However, this evidence could cut both ways. Relations between the two men may not have been easy: Defoe had recently refused to give Baker a dowry for the marriage of his daughter. It is possible that the blatant advertisement served as a means of making recompense.

ENDNOTES TO CHAPTER THREE:

1. My information concerning Monboddo's first visit to Memmie Le Blanc is drawn from the appendix to *Antient Metaphysics: or, the Science of Universals*, Vol. 4 (Edinburgh: 1795: 403-8).

2. Monboddo gives the address in his preface to *An Account of a Savage Girl, Caught WILD in the Woods of Champagne*, (Edinburgh, A. Kincaid and J. Bell, 1768: iii).

3. "Au mois de Septembre 1731, une fille de neuf ou dix ans pressée par las soif, entra sur la brune dans le Village de Songi, situé à quatre ou cinq lieues de Châlons en Champagne, du côté du midi. Elle avoit les pieds nuds, le corps couvert de haillons & de peaux, les cheveux sous une calotte de calebrasse, le visage & les mains noirs comme une Négresse. Elle étoit armée d'un bâton court & gros par le bout en forme de massue. Les premiers qui l'apperçurent s'ensuirent en criant, *voilà le Diable*; en effet, son ajustement & sa couleur pouvoient bien donner cette idée à des Païsans. Ce fut à qui fermeroit le plus vîte sa porte & ses fenêtres. Mais quelqu'un croyant apparemment que le Diable avoir peur des chiens, lâcha sur elle un dogue armé d'un collier à pointes de fer; la Sauvage le voyant approcher en fureur l'attendit de pied ferme, tenant sa petite masse d'armes à deux mains, en la posture de ceux, qui pour donner plus d'étendue aux coups de leur coignée, la lèvent de côté, & voyant le chien à sa portée, elle lui déchargea un si terrible coup sur la tête qu'elle l'étendit mort à ses pieds. Toute joyeuse de sa victoire elle se mit à sauter plusieurs fois par dessus le corps du chien. De-là elle essaya d'ouvrir une porte, & n'ayant pu y réussir, elle regagna la campagne du côté de la rivière, & monta sur un arbre où elle s'endormit tranquillement" (*Savage Girl*, 1755: 3-4).

4. "Elle ne m'a rien dit de sa doleur de se voir prise, ni des efforts qu'elle fit sans doute pour s'échaper; mais on peut bien en juger ..." (*Savage Girl*, 1755: 6).

5. For information concerning Monboddo's life and reputation see William Knight, *Lord Monboddo and Some of His Contemporaries* (London: John Murray, 1906) and E.L. Cloyd, *James Burnett, Lord Monboddo* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972).

Monboddo's reputation in our own time (if reputation can be said to exist where knowledge is so scanty) is that of a crank. This position probably derives from the fact that acquaintance with Monboddo's speculations most often occurs either through Boswell's reports of Johnson's antagonism, or through the supposedly satirical presentation of Mr. Forester and Sir Oran in Thomas Love Peacock's *Melincourt* (London: 1817).

Boswell's account of Sunday, May 8, 1773, reads:

> He [Johnson] attacked Lord Monboddo's strange speculations on the primitive state of human nature; observing, "Sir, it is all conjecture about a thing useless, even were it known to be true. Knowledge of all kinds is good. Conjecture, as to things useful, is good; but conjecture as to what it would be useless to know, such as whether men went upon all four, is very idle." (Boswell, 1953: 547)

Lord Monboddo disliked Johnson, and Boswell's several attempts to bring about their

friendship proved vain.

Even in his own time, Monboddo's lack of the sense of the ridiculous ensured that he could be popularly dismissed as a crank. There is even some evidence that his views were generally though good-humouredly disdained by the public at large. Iain Gordon Brown, "A Character of Lord Monboddo" in *Notes and Queries*, Vol. 231, December 1986: 523-4 is informative on the lack of respect shown to Lord Monboddo's ideas among the Edinburgh intellectuals. However, on the continent Monboddo was treated with greater seriousness. Herder praised *Of the Origin and Progress of Language* on the first few volumes' translation into German by E.A Schmidt (Riga: 1784-6). There is also some evidence that this same work was popular in France.

6. See *Mercure de France, Dédié au Roy. Pieces Fugitives, en Vers et en Prose*, December 1731: 2983-2991 (*Savage Girl*, Paris: 1731).

7. Biographical information on La Condamine can be found in Achille Ambroise Anatole Le Seuer, *Mémoires de L'Académie des Sciences, des Lettres et des Arts D'Amiens* (Amiens, 1909, 16: 1-80), Victor Hagen's description of La Condamine's South American adventures in *South America Called Them* (London: 1949), and in his own account of his travels, *Relation abrégée d'un voyage fait dans l'intérieur de l'Amérique Mériodionale* (Paris: 1745).

8. It does seem that the translator of the Monboddo text worked with a copy of the original translation on hand. For instance, the 1768 translation often follows the earlier version's re-punctuation of the French text. Although the 1760 translation is in some ways the more elegant and natural of the two English versions, unless otherwise stated quotations concerning the account of "the savage girl" are all drawn from the 1768 text. This is simply because the focus of my reading is the place of the "savage girl" in Monboddo's work. Both texts translate the appendices in the original French text.

9. The "Douglas Cause" was a legal case that Monboddo was working on, involving the rights of inheritance of Archibald Stewart to the estate of Sir John Stewart and Lady Jane Douglas. The case turned upon whether Stewart really was the child of the Lady Jane Douglas. For further information see Cloyd (Oxford, 1972: 22-34). As in Monboddo's Preface, the case was complicated by the impossibility of finding conclusive proof to ascertain a child's origins.

10. The Esquimaux here occupy the position held by the Australian aborigines in later race theory.

11. "Cette comparaison est d'elle, & pourroit bien venir de l'idée des écureuils volans qu'elle a pû voir dans sa jeunesse: ce qui donne un nouveau poids aux conjectures que nous ferons sur le païs où elle est née" (*Savage Girl*, 1755: 8).

12. " ... elle étoit aprivoisée depuis quelques années; mais son humeur, ses manières, & même sa voix & sa parole, ne paroissoient être, à ce qu'elle assure, que d'une petite fille de quatre à cinq ans. Le son de sa voix étoit aigu & perçant quoique petit, ses paroles

brèves & embarrassées, telles que d'un enfant qui ne sçait pas encore les termes pour exprimer ce qu'il veut dire ..." (*Savage Girl*, 1755: 11).

13. The writer of the main narrative considers it certain that Memmie is an Esquimaux. Monboddo rejects this solution since the Esquimaux are (as he believed) hairy and intensely ugly while Memmie Le Blanc is neither. He suggests instead that she is either a native of Labrador or of the Huron race. Much of Monboddo's preface is given over to elaborating the arguments in favour of these guesses.

14. "Indépendamment de l'aversion naturelle qu'avoit Mlle. le Blanc pour le feu, de son inclination à se plonger dans l'eau par le tems le plus froid, de son goût dominant pour le poisson crud, qui faisoit son aliment favori, & des autres remarques précédentes qui ne permettent pas de douter qu'elle ne soit née dans les pays septentrionaux voisins de la mer glacialle, sa couleur blanche & semblable à la notre achève de décider la question sans équivoque, puisqu'il est constant que tous les peuples originaires de l'intérieur de l'Afrique & des climats chauds ou temperés de l'Amérique sont ou noirs ou rougeatres ou bazanez. S'il n'étoit question que d'imaginer comment deux jeunes sauvages des terres Arctiques ont pu passer en France, mille conjectures différentes, également probables, pourroient satisfaire à cette question [...] Les Nègres transportés d'Afrique en Amériques, dans un climat semblable au leur n'ont aucune peine à s'y accoutumer & y réussissent très bien; mais on a tenté sans succès d'y naturaliser des sauvages des pays septentrionaux" (*Savage Girl*, 1755: 42-44).

15. "Il n'est pas ici question de faire un Roman ni d'imaginer des avantures, mais où la certitude manque on doit chercher la vraisemblance. Parmi les différentes conjectures que l'on peut faire pour lier ces différens faits, voici ce me semble une des plus simples & des plus vraisemblables" (1755: 43).

16. "La voyant si attentive à ces deux Figures, je lui demandai en riant pour la faire parler, si elle reconnoissoit là quelqu'un de ses parens; elle répondit: je n'en sais rien; mais il me semble avoir vû cela quelque part. Quoi, repris-je, des hommes & des femmes bâtis comme ceux-là? A peu-près, dit-elle ..." (1755: 61).

17. "... j'ai pensé qu'elle ne l'avoit faite que sur un souvenir dont l'origine ne peut être que dans ce qu'elle a vû dans ses premières années, & dont elle n'a plus qu'une idée confuse: aussi, ajouta t-elle tout de suite, au reste ce sont des idées si éloignées, qu'il n'y faut pas compter beaucoup" (1755: 62).

18. "Aussi ne fut-ce pas ses paroles qui fortifèrent le plus mes conjectures; mais cet instinct ou sentiment naturel & non refléchi qui la fixa sur ces deux figures seules, & ne lui laissa que de l'indifférence pour toutes les autres, comme si la nature lui eût fait sentir qu'elles ne lui touchoient pas de si près que celles-ci ..." (1755: 62-63).

19. "... au moins fut-ce l'induction que je tirai de la distinction qu'elle en saisoit, & de ces paroles dires fort naturellement, *nous n'avions rien dans nos mains*, que la vérité seule, quoique inconnue, lui fit dire" (1755: 63).

20. Objections that "the wild man" as an embodiment of the "savage" would be out-of-date by the mid-eighteenth century are untenable. Aspects of "the wild man's" persona in the representation of the "savage" continue as late as the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. For example, Mowgli in Kipling's short story "In The Rukh" (London: 1893), Edgar Rice Burroughs' Tarzan (New York: 1914), and even images of the American mythic beast "Bigfoot" all possess aspects of the medieval "wild man".

21. "Comme je m'informai plus curieusement de cet habit & de ses autres ornemens pour les mieux reconnoitre dan les desseins que j'ai qui représentent des Esquimaux, elle me dit qu'on lui avoit ôté chez M. le Vicomte d'Epinoy ses premiers habits, ses armes, son collier & pendans; qu'il y avoit quelques caractères inconnus imprimés sur ces armes, qui auroient pû faire mieux reconnoître sa Nation; mais que tout cela avoit été gardé comme une curiosité chez le Vicomte d'Epinoy, où elle a continué de les voir & même de les porter plusieurs fois. Cependant M. de L.. m'a dit qu'il n'avoit point eu connoissance de ces armes ..." (*Savage Girl*, 1755: 38).

22. "Leur repas fait, elles prirent leur course dans les terres en s'éloignant de la rivière. Peu de tems après, celle qui est devenue Mademoiselle le Blanc apperçut la premiere à terre un chapelet, que quelque passant avoit sans doute perdu. Soit que ce fut un object nouveau pour elle, ou qu'elle se rappellât d'en avoir vû de semblable, elle se mit à faire des fauts & des cris de joie, & craignant que sa compagne ne s'emparât de ce petit trésor, elle porta la main dessus pour le ramasser, ce qui lui attira un si grand coup de masse sur la main qu'elle en perdit l'usage dans le premier moment, mais non la force de rendre avec l'autre à sa compagne un coup de son arme sur le front qui l'étendit par terre poussant des cris horribles. Le chapelet fut le prix de sa victoire; elle s'en fit un bracelet. Cependant, touchée apparemment de compassion pour sa camarade, dont la plaie saignoit beaucoup, elle courut chercher quelques grenouilles, en écorcha une, lui colla la peau sur le front pour en arrêter le sang, & banda la plaie avec une laniere d'écorce d'arbre, qu'elle arracha avec ses ongles; après quoi elles se séparèrent, la blessée ayant pris son chemin vers la rivière, & la victorieuse vers Songi" (*Savage Girl*, 1755:13-15).

23. "Je tiens de M. de L.. qu'il a oui dire chez M. le Vicomte d'Epinoy, que les deux petites Sauvages avoient même été vendues dans quelqu'une des Isles d'Amériques; qu'elles faisoient le plaisir d'une Maîtresse, mais que le mari ne pouvant les souffrir, la Maîtresse avoit été obligée de les revendre & de les laisser rembarquer, soit dans leur premier Vaisseau, soit dans quelqu'autre. Ces circonstances cadrent assez à celles qui sont rapportées dans la Lettre déja citée, imprimée dans le Mercure de France; mais on voit bien, encore une fois, que ces détails ne peuvent être que le résultat des conjectures, plus ou moins probables, que l'on forma sur les premiers signes & les premiers discours qu'on put tirer de la jeune Fille quand elle commeça de parler François, quelques mois après qu'elle eut été trouvée, & qu'il est bien difficile de compter sur les circonstances d'un récit aussi détaillé, qui ne pourroit avoir été fait que par signes" (*Savage Girl*, 1755: 33-34).

24. Robert Wokler interestingly compares Monboddo and Kames in his esssay, "Apes and Races in the Scottish Enlightenment: Monboddo and Kames on the Nature of Man" in Peter Jones (ed), *Philosophy and Science in the Scottish Enlightenment* (Edinburgh, 1988: 145-168).

25. See Edward Tyson, *Orang-Outang, sive Homo Sylvestris: Or The Anatomy of a Pygmie Compared with That of a Monkey, An Ape, and a Man. To which is added a PHILOLOGICAL ESSAY Concerning the Pygmies, the Cynocephali, the Satyrs, and Sphinges of the Ancients. Wherein it will appear that they are all either APES or MONKEYS, and not MEN, as formerly pretended.* (London: Thomas Bennet, 1699).

The designation of the orang-outang as "homo sylvestris" or man of the woods suffices to indicate how the orang-outang took on the aspect of the "wild man".

26. T.H. Huxley, *Evidence As To Man's Place In Nature* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1863) explores this same conjunction between the ideas of science and the representations of myth:

> Ancient traditions, when tested by the severe processes of modern investigation, commonly enough fade away into mere dreams: but it is singular how often the dream turns out to have been a half-waking one, presaging a reality (Huxley, 1863: 3).

In this case the reality presaged by myth is that of Darwin's evolutionary theories, suggesting as they do a kinship between human beings and apes. Huxley points out how the names of the various species of ape contain references to this resemblance. The name "gorilla", coined by Dr. Thomas Savage in the late 1840's, first appeared in the writings of Periplus of Hanno where it applies to "certain hairy savage people" (Huxley, 1863: 22). The name "orang-outang" means, as has been mentioned, wild man of the woods. The mandrill means literally man-ape, "drill" meaning ape in Old English.

For Huxley, as for all the naturalists written about in this chapter, the relation between man and ape calls up the question of the division of the species, and more pertinently, humanity's "place in nature":

> The question of questions for mankind - the problem which underlies all others, and is more deeply interesting than any other - is the ascertainment of the place which Man occupies in nature and of his relations to the universe of things. Whence our race had come; what are the limits of our power over nature, and of nature's power over us; to what goal we are tending; are the problems which present themselves anew and with undiminished interest to every man born into the world (Huxley, 1863: 57).

27. For instance, he writes:

> And tho' on this occasion, it may be, the Poets have enigmatically represented some Nobler Secrets of *Philosophy*, by what they relate under the *Fables* they have made of these *Satyrs*, the *Fauni*, the *Nymphae*, *Pan*, *Aegipan*, *Sylvanus*, *Silenus*, or any other name they have given of this sort of *Animal*; yet I think my self no farther concerned at present than to shew what might give the first rise to and occasion of these Inventions: or rather to prove that the *Satyrs* were neither *Men*, nor *Demi-gods*, nor *Daemons*; but *Monkeys* or *Baboons*, that in *Africa* were worshipped as the *Gods* of the Country; and being so, might give the *Poets* the Subject of the Stories which have been forged about them (Tyson, 1699, 2: 46).

It would be simplistic to suggest that in this project Tyson was replacing fancy with fact in a crude manner. Rather his work suggests a collaboration between the aims of science

and poetry. What is lacking in Tyson's analysis is insight into the nature of fiction and myth, that fiction does not strictly speaking refer to the "real world" at all, but exists in a linguistic category removed from scientific notions of substantial fact and lies. However, at the close of Tyson's treatise on philology there is one striking and moving condemnation of the works of the imagination:

> How jolly therefore soever and merry the *Satyrs* may be by night amongst themselves, with their Dancing and Musick: yet they have been frightful to Men formerly, as the Stories of the *Fairies* and *Hobgoblins* are (as I said before) to Children now; and indeed the telling Children Stories of this kind, is a strong mischievious Custom; for they are thereby impressed with such Fears, as perhaps they cannot conquer all their Life time (Tyson, 1699, 2: 47-8).

28. In William Smith, *A New Voyage to Guinea* (1744), the description of Mandrill leads to a similar linking to the child: "'They never go upon all-fours, like apes; but cry, when vexed or teased, just like children ...'" (Quoted in Huxley, 1863: 11).

29. It should be stated here that Tyson dissected a "Pygmy" that he had never seen alive himself. It is plain from the illustrations and diagrams in the book that this pygmy was not in fact an orang-outang but rather a chimpanzee, that is a species not officially recognised as existing by western scientists at this point.

30. See "The Strange Adventures of Andrew Battell Of Leigh in Essex, sent by the Portugals prisoner to Angola, who lived there, and in the adjoining Regions, neere eighteene yeeres" in *Hakluytus Posthumus, or Purchas his Pilgrimes*, (Glasgow, 1905, 6: 367-406).

31. For discussion of the work of the naturalists the most important source remains Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things* (1966) (London: Tavistock Publications, 1970). However, Osip Mandelstam's essays "On The Naturalists" and "Journey To Armenia" are brilliant and idiosyncratic appraisals of the work of the great naturalists from Linnaeus and Buffon to Darwin. Mandelstam writes:

> Pallas arrays the insect in a costume and stage makeup, as if it were about to perform in the Chinese Royal Theater or the Imperial Ballet. It is presented as if it were a precious gem or a portrait in a locket. Linnæus' system of classification relied on such descriptions: nature has a sagacious plan, which can be directly comprehended through classification, for rapture is the act of recognition, they are one and the same. Linnæus wrote: "The elegant structure of the heart, with all the veins that lead into it, is the sole cause of the circulation of the blood." (Mandelstam, 1991: 332).

32. Monboddo writes:

> As to the humanity of the Orang-Outangs, and the story of the men with tails, I think neither the one nor the other is necessarily connected with my system; and if I am in error, I have only followed Linnaeus, and I think I have given a better reason than he has done for the Orang-Outang belonging to us, I mean, his use of a stick. From which, and many other

> circumstances, it appears to me evident that he is much above the Simian race, to which I think you very rightly disclaim the relation of brother, though I think that the race is kin to us, though not so nearly related (Knight, 84-85).

It may be that Monboddo is being disingenuous in claiming the authority of Linnaeus. The distinction between "Homo" and "Simia" is found in both the final Linnaean edition as well in the Gmelin editions.

Further information on Monboddo's contacts with Linnaeus can be found in Margaret McKay, "Peacock, Monboddo, and the Swedish Connection" in *Notes and Queries*, Vol. 235, December 1990: 422-4. Monboddo certainly corresponded with Linnæus, mainly over the question whether human beings had ever had tails.

33. At the conclusion of Volume I of his work on language, Monboddo sets out what his work has expressed:

> With these observations I conclude this book, and this first part of the work; in which I have endeavoured to shew, That no part of language, neither *matter* nor *form*, is natural to man, but the effect of acquired habit: - That this habit could not have been acquired, except by men living in political society; but that neither is the political life natural to man: - That the political arose from the necessities of men, and that it may exist without the use of language: - That the first languages were without art, such as might be expected among the people altogether barbarous: - and, lastly, That if language was at all invented, there is no reason to believe that it was invented only in one nation, and that all the languages of the earth are but dialects of that one original language; although there by good reason to believe, that language has not been the invention of many nations, and that all the languages presently spoken in Europe, Asia, and a part of Africa, are derived from one original language (Monboddo, 1773, 1: 490).

34. Monboddo argues: "it seems to be a law of nature, that no species of thing is formed at once, but by steps and progression from one stage to another" (Monboddo, 1773, 1: 161).

35. Once again I should point out my indebtedness to Hannah Arendt and, in this context, W.H. Auden (London: 1968). Arendt discusses the distinction between the social and political in the second chapter of *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958).

36. Monboddo writes:

> ... man himself was originally a wild savage animal, till he was tamed, and, as I may say, *humanized*, by civility and arts. Whoever, therefore, would trace human nature up to its source, must study very diligently the manners of barbarous nations, instead of forming theories of *man* from what he observes among civilized nations (Monboddo, 1773, 1: 133).

The influence of Rousseau's ideas concerning the sophistication, and hence corruption,

of humanity in civilized conditions is discernible here.

37. For Monboddo at times the orang-outang's silence seems almost wilful, so tantalising is the possibility of its entering the human domain unambiguously:

> Further, not only solitary savages, but a whole nation, if I may call them so, have been found without the use of speech. This is the case of the Ouran Outangs that are found in the kingdom of Angola in Africa, and in several parts of Asia. They are exactly of the human form; walking erect, not upon all-four, like the savages that have been found in Europe; they use sticks for weapons; they live in society; they make huts of branches of trees, and they carry off negroe girls, whom they make slaves of, and use both for work and pleasure [...] But though from the particulars above mentioned it appears certain, that they are of our species, and though they have made some progress in the arts of life, they have not come the length of language; and accordingly none of them that have been brought to Europe could speak, and what seems strange, never learned to speak. I myself saw at Paris one of them, whose skin was stuffed, standing upon a shelf in the King's cabinet of natural curiosities. He had exactly the shape and features of a man; and particularly I was informed, that he had the organs of pronunciation as perfect as we have. He lived several years at Versailles, and died by drinking spirits. He had as much of the understanding of a man as could be expected from his education, and performed many little offices to the lady with whom he lived; but never learned to speak. I was well-informed too, of one of them belonging to a French gentleman in India, who used to go to market for him, but was likewise mute (Monboddo, 1773, 1: 174-176).

It is almost certain that Monboddo visited the stuffed orang-outang on the same visit to Paris in which he met Memmie Le Blanc.

38. Monboddo describest his purpose here:

> The subject of this volume is the *History of Man*, by which I mean, not what is commonly called History, that is the History of Nations and Empires, but the History of the Species *Man* [...] It is, therefore, as I have said, a work of such extent and variety, that no author, ancient or modern, has so much as attempted it (Monboddo, 1779-99, 4: i).

The last part of this statement is to be doubted. It is possible to see in Rousseau and other political theorists the beginnings of an attempt to construct a universal history, precisely concerned with the history of "the Species *Man*".

39. Monboddo writes:

> As the brute has not intelligence, he wants also another thing, which, as I have observed elsewhere, belongs to man, and is the foundation of all his knowledge, even of the knowledge of his own existence: And that is *consciousness* of what he does; by which Des Cartes knew that he existed; "For," says he, "I think: Therefore I am." - Now the brute, wanting that consciousness, does not know that he, himself, exists (Monboddo, 1779-99, 6: 287-288).

40. "Mlle le Blanc avoue qu'elle n'a commencé à réfléchir que depuis qu'elle a reçu quelque éducation; & que tout le temps qu'elle a passé dans les bois, elle n'avit presque d'autres idées que le sentiment de ses besoins, & le désir de les satisfaire" (*Savage Girl*, 1755: 30).

41. Monboddo states:

> Last of all, and what, more than anything I have hitherto said, makes it evident that our *mind* is of a nature quite different from that of the brute, is the power which it has, of turning upon itself, making itself its own object, and thereby discovering its own nature; and, by analogy, the nature, likewise, of superior *minds*. Now, whatever degrees of sense, or even of reason, we may allow to those superior beasts I mentioned, this faculty no body will pretend that they possess; or that they are able to *recognise* their own minds, or to form any notion of superior *minds* (Monboddo, 1779-99, 1: 136-7).

42. Here Monboddo describes the two wild children:

> *"A Fact* - There are at present two children at Cruwyt in Devonshire, who have been suffered, by their mother, to run wild from their infancy rather than accept of the parish assistance. The one is a boy of ten, the other a girl of twelve years of age. They are both in a state of nature, feeding only on wild berries, and running on *all fours* with amazing celerity. If pursued, they utter a terrific scream, and hide themselves on the top of a hill, or in the recesses of a thicket. They are never seen in a standing posture; nor can they be prevailed on to approach any person but their mother, with whom, though they cannot speak, they have always kept up a distant and fearful communication" (Monboddo, 1779-99, 4: 21).

It may seem that a great latitude is here being used in the term "the state of nature", describing as it does two children who have merely been allowed to escape from parental control. However, their existence outside language, custom, law, and firm relations with their family or society at large would in fact make their life indistinguishable from the condition described in the political formulation of the term.

43. As this shows, the problem of Monboddo's analysis was a religious one. If humanity ascends from a state of nature that is literally animal, at what stage in this progress does humanity acquire an individual soul, something which being in essence immaterial cannot arise from the processes of matter?

This origin requires an idea of a divine sanction, an intervention in the progress: though the problem might be overcome by the idea that soul/"mind" initiates and guides this progress. Monboddo's solution was to represent mankind "falling" into the state of nature:

> For man after his fall was no more than a mere animal, with sensations only, but without intellect, which he acquires, as I have shown, by the means of civil society (Monboddo, 1779-99, 6: 288).

44. Writing in 1900, by which time the recapitulatory model was familiar from evolutionary and psychological theories, Knight makes this same point:

> But perhaps the root-principle of his teaching was the ascent and progress

> that is to be seen in Nature, from the inorganic, through the organic, up to man; a progress which has gone on historically in the human species. The analogy of the growth of the individual from the embryo up to the fully-formed product, suggests that the race was once embryonic, a state in which man was an animal, *sans* house, *sans* fire, *sans* clothes, *sans* speech, etc, etc (Knight, 1900: 38).

45. Indeed Monboddo argues eloquently for the coincidence of his own evolutionary ideas with those of the ancient philosophers:

> That the great powers of the human mind are, at first, latent, and immersed in matter, so that the infant is no more than a man in *capacity*, is a fact that, I think, cannot be denied. Aristotle says, that, at his birth, his mind is like a tablet, with nothing written upon it, or, as we would say, a white sheet of paper. And even the Platonic philosophers, who maintain, that his ideas are not acquired here, but brought with him, acknowledge, that they are so overwhelmed at first with matter, that they lie, like sparks under ashes, which do not appear till they are stirred and roused; and that, they say, is done by the objects of sense. And, therefore, the doctrine that I have maintained elsewhere, concerning the progress of the human mind, from a state no better than mere brutality, (however strange it may appear in modern times,) is the doctrine of all the great philosophers of antiquity ... (Monboddo, 1779-99, 1: 144-145).

46. The quote is drawn from M.R. James, *The Bestiary* (A reproduction of Manuscript I i.4.26 in the University Library, Cambridge), and the translation comes from T.H White, *The Book Of Beasts* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1954, 34) which is a translation of the same bestiary.

ENDNOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR:

1. Robert Wokler states that Monboddo only had a "second-hand acquaintance" with Condillac's writings (Wokler, 1988: 147).

2. "Tant que les enfans dont je viens de parler, ont vécu séparément, l'exercise des opérations de leur ame a été borné à celui de la perception & de la conscience, qui ne cesse point quand on est éveillé; à celui de l'attention, qui avoit lieu toutes les fois que quelques perceptions les affectoient d'une manière plus particuliére; à celui de la réminiscence, quand des circonstances qui les avoient frappés, se représentoient à eux, avant que les liaisons qu'elles avoient formées, eussent été détruites; & à un exercise fort peu étendu de l'imagination" (Condillac, 1746, 2: 4).

3. "Ce Couple eut un enfant, qui pressé par des besoins qu'il ne pouvoit faire connaître que difficilement, agita toutes les parties de son corps. Sa langue, fort flexible, se replia d'une maniére extraordinaire, & prononça un mot tout nouveau. Le besoin continuant donna encore lieu aux mêmes efforts; cet enfant agita sa langue comme la première fois, & articule encore le même son. Les parens surpris, ayant enfin deviné ce qu'il vouloit, essayerent, en le lui donant, de répéter le même mot. La peine qu'ils eurent à le prononcer fit voir qu'ils n'auroient pas été d'eux-mêmes capables de l'inventer" (Condillac, 1746, 2: 9-10).

4. "Sitôt qu'un homme fut reconnu par un autre pour un être sentant, pensant et semblable à lui, le désir ou le besoin de lui communiquer ses sentimens et ses pensées lui en fit chercher les moyens. Ces moyens ne peuvent se tirer que des sens, les seuls instrumens par lesquels un homme puisse agir sur un autre. Voilà donc l'institution des signes sensibles pour exprimer la pensée" (Rousseau, 1817: 501).

5. "Les fruits ne se dérobent point à nos mains, on peut s'en nourrir sans parler; on poursuit en silence la proie dont on veut se repaître: mais pour émouvoir un jeune coeur, pour repousser un agresseur injuste, la nature dicte des accens, des cris, des plaintes. Voilà les plus anciens mots inventés, et voilà pourquoi les premières langues furent chantantes et passionnées avant d'être simples et méthodiques" (Rousseau, 1817: 505).

6. "Sous de vieux chênes, vainquers des ans, une ardente jeunesse oubliait par degrés sa férocité: on s'apprivoisait peu à peu les uns avec les autres; en s'efforçant de se faire entendre, on apprit à s'expliquer. Là se firent les premières fêtes: les pieds bondissaient de joie, le geste empressé ne suffisait plus, la voix l'accompagnait d'accens passionnés; le plaisir et le désir, confondus ensemble, se faisaient sentir à la fois: là fut enfin le vrai berceau des peuples; et du pur cristal des fontaines sortirent les premiers feux de l'amour" (Rousseau, 1817: 525).

7. See Anne-Robert-Jacques Turgot, *On Progress, Sociology, and Economics*, translated and edited by Ronald L. Meek (Cambridge, 1973). Much of what Turgot says will call to mind the opening pages on animals in Friedrich Nietzsche's "On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life" (Cambridge, 1983).

8. There is an obvious confusion in Rousseau's political thought, which asserts both that society is an artificial distortion of the "natural man", and also that humans must surrender their own natural liberty absolutely to the control of the Legislators. Partly this confusion stems from the development of Rousseau's thought between the early *Discourses* and the *Social Contract*. However, I would argue that the confusion is an inevitable aspect of the formulation of a desirable state of nature that precedes an Aristotelian "natural"/conventional society. The difficulty of combining the two ideas is already present in Grotius, who went some way to solving these complications by declaring that "society" is natural, while "the state" is founded in contract. Rousseau's confusion arises from his assertion that humans are *naturally* solitary and feel any kind of relationship as oppressive.

9. That this educational process is actually a question of the mastery of the old over the young is exemplified by the educational experiment of Thomas Day, one of Rousseau's English disciples. Day isolated two orphan girls from social life, and undertook their education himself, with a view to marrying the elder. In his biography of Day, James Keir describes how when these "children of nature" had grown up as rational human beings, Day's plans were shown to have been in vain:

> But when he had relinquished this scheme, and had delivered them up, while they were yet children, to a boarding school, they were then no longer *children of nature*, but of *the world*, and they could retain none of the specific differences which distinguished them from others, and on which any expectations, that he might have originally formed, could have been grounded (Keir, 1791: 28).

10. Fittingly, Burke's parody of Bolingbroke at times reads like a prescient critique of Foucault:

> To prove, that these Sort of policed Societies are a Violation offered to Nature, and a Constraint upon the human Mind, it needs only to look upon the sanguinary Measures, and Instruments of Violence which are every where used to support them (London, 1756: 39).

11. It is difficult to gauge the impact of Itard's work in England. The discovery of the savage child was certainly reported in the English press. Itard's book was published in as *De L'Éducation D'un Homme Sauvage, ou Des Premiers Développemens Physiques et Moraux Du Jeune Sauvage de l'Aveyron* (Paris: 1801). The work was first published on 21 October, 1801. Itard's text was subsequently translated into English as *An Historical Account of the Discovery and Education of a Savage Man, or the First Developments, Physical and Moral of The Young Savage caught in the woods near Aveyron, in the year 1798* (London: Richard Phillips, 1802). The translation was published on 1 March, 1802. It is likely that the rapid translation of the work bears witness both to interest in the case in England, and also to improved communications with France initiated by the Peace of Amiens. (Among the advertisements at the close of the English book are guidebooks for the use of English and French travellers taking advantage of the Peace). In his excellent study of the case, *The Wild Boy of Aveyron* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1977), Harlan Lane gives the translator's name as Nogent. Reference will also be made to Itard's later *A Report Made To His Excellency The*

Minister of the Interior. This was submitted in March 1806, and was published as *Rapport Fait a S.E. le Ministre de l'Intérieur sur les Nombreux Développments et l'Etat Actuel du Sauvage de l'Aveyron* (Paris: Imprimerie Impériale, 1807). Quotations in translation from this report are drawn from the English translation, *The Wild Boy Of Aveyron* (New York: 1932) made by George and Muriel Humphrey. Unfortunately, I have been unable to trace a copy of either the original report, or the later French republications. These are found in a compilation of Itard's two reports on the boy in D.M. Bournville, ed., *Rapports et mémoires sur le sauvage de l'Aveyron* (Paris: F. Alcan, 1894), and in J.M.G. Itard, *Traité des maladies de l'oreille et de l'audition*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Méquignon-Marvis Fils, 1842).

12. "Les espérances les plus brillantes et les moins raisonnées avaient devancé à Paris le *sauvage de l'Aveyron*. Beaucoup de curieux se faisaient une joie de voir quel serait son étonnement à la vue de toutes les belles choses de la capitale. D'un autre côté, beaucoup de personnes, recommandables d'ailleurs par leurs lumières, oubliant que nos organes sont d'autant moins flexibles et l'imitation d'autant plus difficile, que l'homme est éloigné de la société et de l'époque de son premier âge, crurent que l'éducation de cet individu ne serait l'affaire que de quelques mois, et qu'on l'entendrait bientôt donner sur sa vie passée, les renseignemens les plus piquans. Au lieu de tout cela, que vit-on? un enfant d'une malpropeté dégoûtante, affecté de mouvemens spasmodiques et souvent convulsifs, se balançant sans relâche comme certains animaux de la ménagerie, mordant et égratignant ceux qui le contrariaient, ne témoignant aucune espèce d'affection à ceux qui le servaient; enfin, indifférent à tout, et ne donnent de l'attention à rien" (Itard, 1801: 9-10).

13. "Jeté sur ce globe, sans forces physiques et sans idées innées, hors d'état d'obéir par lui-même aux lois constitutionnelles de son organisation, qui l'appellent au premier rang du systême des êtres, l'homme ne peut trouver qu'au sein de la société la place éminente qui lui fut marquée dans la nature, et serait sans la civilisation, un des plus faibles et des moins intelligens des animaux: vérité, sans doute, bien rebattue, mais qu'on n'a point encore rigoureusement démontrée" (Itard, 1801: 1).

This passage may owe something to Offray de La Mettrie:

> In spite of all these prerogatives of man over brutes, 'tis an honour to him to be ranked in the same class. True it is, that 'till a certain age, he is more an animal than they, because he brought less instinct with him into the world [...] Put him with an animal upon the brink of a precipice; he alone will fall into it: he will be drowned, where the other will save himself by swimming. At fourteen or fifteen years of age, he scarce has a notion of the great pleasures that will attend him in the reproduction of his species; when a youth he knows not readily how to go about a sport which nature so quickly teaches all animals: He hides himself, as if he were ashamed to emjoy pleasure, and to be formed to be happy, whilst other animals seem to glory in being *Cynics* [...] Nature has then made us inferiour at first to other animals, to the end that we should by this means display to greater advantage the wonderful effects of education, which is the only thing that raises us from a level with the brutes, and exalts us above them (La Mettrie, 1750: 36-7).

As in Itard, "man" is the incompetent animal.

14. "I. vue: L'attacher à la vie sociale, en la lui rendant plus douce que celle qu'il menait alors, et sur-tout plus analogue à la vie qu'il venait de quitter.
II. vue: Réveiller la sensibilité nerveuse par les stimulans les plus énergiques, et quelquefois par les vives affections de l'ame.
III. vue: Étendre la sphère de ses idées en lui donnant des besoins nouveaux, et eu multipliant ses rapports avec les êtres envionnans.
IV. vue: Le conduire à l'usage de la parole, en determinant l'exercise de l'imitation par la loi impérieuse de la nécessité.
V. vue: Exercer pendant quelque-tems sur les objets de ses besoins physiques les plus simples opérations de l'esprit, et en déterminer ensuite l'application sur des objets d'instruction" (Itard, 1801: 21-22).

15. "Au milieu de cet indifférence générale, les administrateurs de l'Institution nationale des Sourds-Muets et son célèbre directeur n'oublièrent point que la société, en attirant à elle ce jeune infortuné, avait contracté envers lui des obligations indispensables, qu'il leur appartenait de remplir" (Itard, 1801: 10-11).

16. "Mais ce n'était pas toujours d'une manière aussi vive et aussi bruyante que se manifestaient ses sensations, à la vue de ces grands effets de la Nature. Il est digne de remarque, que dans certains cas elles paraissaient emprunter l'expression calme du regret et de la mélancolie: conjecture bien hasardée, et bien opposée sans doute aux opinions des métaphysiciens, mais dont on ne pouvait se défendre quand on observait avec soin et dans quelques circonstances ce jeune infortuné. Ainsi, lorsque la rigeur du tems chassait tout le monde du jardin, c'était le moment qu'il choisissait pour y descendre. Il en faisait plusieurs fois le tour, et finissait par s'asseoir sur le bord du bassin. Je me suis souvent arrêté pendant des heures entières et avec un plaisir indicible, à l'examiner das cette situation; à voir comme tous ces mouvemens spasmodiques et ce balancement continuel de tout son corps diminuaient, s'appaisaient par degrés, pour faire place à une attitude plus tranquille; et comme insensiblement sa figure, insignifiante ou grimacière, prenait un caractère bien prononcé de tristesse ou de rêverie mélancolique, à mesure que ses yeux s'attachaient fixément sur la surface de l'eau, et qu'il y jetait lui-même, de tems en tems, quelques débris de feuilles desséchées. - Lorsque, pendant la nuit et par un beau clair de lune, les rayons de cet astre venaient à pénétrer dans sa chambre, il manquait rarement de s'éveiller et de se placer devant la fenêtre. Il restait là, selon le rapport de sa gouvernante, pendant une partie de la nuit, debout, immobile, le col tendu, les yeux fixés vers les campagnes éclairées par la lune, et livré à une sorte d'extase contemplative, dont l'immobilité et le silence n'étaient interrompus que par une inspiration très élevée, qui revenait à de longs intervalles, et qu'accompagnait presque toujours un petit son plaintif" (Itard, 1801: 26-27).

Nogent, the English translator, omits the phrase that shows that the boy specifically goes out into the garden at those moments when it is empty.

17."En supposant, pour épuiser toutes les hypothèses, qu'il vivoit dans les forêts, il n'auroit pu se le représenter que par les perceptions qu'il se seroit rappellées. Ces perceptions ne pouvoient être qu'en petit nombre; ne se souvenant point de celles qui les avoient précédées, suivies ou interrompues, il ne se seroit point retracé la succession des

parties de ce temps. D'où il seroit arrivé qu'il ne l'auroit jamais soupçonné qu'elle eût eu un commencement, & qu'il ne l'auroit cependant envisagée que comme un instant. En un mot, le souvenir confus de son premier état l'auroit mis dans l'embarras de s'imaginer d'avoir toujours été, & de ne pouvoir se représenter son éternité prétendue que comme un moment. Je ne doute donc pas qu'il n'eût été bien surpris, quand on lui auroit dit qu'il avoit commencé d'être; et qu'il ne l'eût encore été, quand on auroit ajouté qu'il avoit passé par différens accroissemens" (Condillac, 1746, 1: 204).

18. "Je fis joindre à l'administration des bains, l'usage des frictions sèches le long de l'épine vertébrale, et même des chatouillemens dans la région lombaire. Ce dernier moyen n'était pas un des moins excitans; je me vis même contraint de le proscrire, quand ses effets ne se bornèrent plus à produire des mouvemens de joie, mais parurent s'étendre encore aux organes de la génération, et menacer d'une direction fâcheuse les premiers mouvemens d'une puberté déjà trop précoce" (Itard, 1801: 33-34).

In the English translation, Nogent omits the statement that the boy's puberty is already precociously advanced.

19. "L'amitié qu'il a pour moi est beaucoup plus faible, et cela doit être ainsi. Les soins que prend de lui mad. Guérin sont tous de nature à être appréciés sur-le-champ; et ceux qui je lui donne ne sont pour lui d'aucune utilité sensible. Cette différence est si véritablement due à la cause que j'indique, que j'ai mes heures pour être bien reçu: ce sont celles que jamais je n'ai employées à son instruction. Que je me rende chez lui, par exemple, à l'entrée de la nuit, lorsqu'il vient de se coucher, son premier mouvement est de se mettre sur son séant pour que je l'embrasse, puis de m'attirer à lui en me saisissant le bras et me faisant asseoir sur son lit. Ordinairement alors il me prend la main, la porte sur ses yeux, sur son front, sur l'occiput, et me la tient avec la sienne assez long-tems appliquée sur ces parties" (Itard, 1801: 49).

20. "On en dira ce qu'on voudra, mais j'avouerai que je me prête sans façon à tous ces enfantillages. Peut-être serai-je entendu, si l'on se souvient de l'influence majeure qu'ont sur l'esprit de l'enfant ces complaisances inépuisables, ces petits riens officieux que la Nature a mis dans le cœur d'une mère, qui font éclore les premiers sourires, et naître les premières joies de la vie" (Itard, 1801: 50).

21. "Si par l'expression de *sauvage* on a entendu jusqu'à présent l'homme peu civilisé, on conviendra que celui qui ne l'est en aucune manière, mérite plus rigoureusement encore cette dénomination. Je conserverai donc à celui-ci le nom par lequel on l'a toujours désigné, jusqu'à ce que j'aie rendu compte des motifs qui m'ont déterminé à lui en donner un autre" (Itard, 1801: 9).

ENDNOTES FOR CHAPTER FIVE:

1. In this context, Andrew Lang writes in the introduction to *The True Story Book* (London: 1893):

> About Kaspar Hauser's mystery we can hardly speak of "the truth," for the exact truth will never be known. The depositions of the earliest witnesses were not taken at once; some witnesses altered their evidence in later years; parts of the records of Nuremberg are lost in suspicious circumstances (1893: xiii).

2. Even the date of Hauser's first appearance is a subject for debate. Depending on the source, it may have been the 5th, 26th, or 28th of May. In *The True Story of Kaspar Hauser from Official Documents*, the Duchess of Cleveland includes an appendix of evidence from Weichmann and others. All the witnesses state that the events took place on Easter Monday - an interesting mistake in view of the later identifications of Hauser with Christ. I have followed Feuerbach and taken the 26th as the most likely date.

3. This is another disputable moment. Lang depicts a robust Hauser striding purposefully into town, asking clearly for New Gate Street, and acting in every way ordinarily. Hauser's strength or weakness on his arrival is crucial in attempting to ascertain the veracity of his story about his long confinement. Unfortunately, there seems no way of deciding this question.

4. This can be translated as: "I want to be a rider like father is". "Wo as nit" means "Dunno".

5. "Im Hause des Rittmeisters hielt man ihn bald nur für einen wilden Menschen und führte ihn, bis zur Heimkunft, in den Pferdestall, wo er sogleich auf dem Stroh sich ausstreckte und in tiefen Schlaf versank" (Feuerbach, 1832a: 5).

6. Feuerbach's interest in Hauser may in itself be seen as an argument against the effects of imprisonment as such.

7. "Er wisse nicht, wer er selbst und wo seine Heimath sei. Erst zu Nürnberg sie er auf 'die Welt gekommen'; hier erst habe er erfahren, daß es, außer ihm und 'dem Manne, bei dem er immer gewesen', auch noch andere Menschen und Geschöpfe gebe. So lange er sich entsinnen könne, habe er immer nur in einem Loch (kleinem, niedrigem Gemach, das er zuweilen auch Käfig nennt) gelebt, wo er, blos mit einem Hemd und ledernen, hinten aufgeschlitzten Hosen bekleidet und barfuß, auf dem Boden gesessen sei. Er habe in seinem Gemach nie einen Laut gehört, weder von Menschen, noch von Tieren, noch von sonst etwas. Den Himmel habe er nie gesehen, noch habe er je eine Hellung (Sonnenlicht), wie zu Nürunberg, wahrgenommen. Einen Unterschied zwischen Tag und Nacht habe er

nie erfahren, noch weniger habe er die schönen Lichter am Himmel jemals zu sehen bekommen" (Feuerbach, 1832a: 41-42).

8. Apparently at this time the Gasthaus zum Wilden Mann was a dingy and second-rate place (Mackensie, 1981-2: 128). It therefore might be thought rather unusual for an English aristocrat to be staying there. This might lead us to wonder if Stanhope was not motivated to stay there by a spirit of irony regarding the hotel's name: though it may be that poverty was the actual cause.

9. Feuerbach was one interested party who did not at first disapprove of Lord Stanhope's involvement with Hauser. His text on Hauser is dedicated to Lord Stanhope in glowing terms, extolling him as Hauser's benefactor.

10. Evans' picture of Hauser's deathbed scene is sentimental, but may nonetheless accurately portray a mood that Hauser, in his self-pity, indulged in at the end. A less melodramatic reading of his last moments can be found in Lang's *Historical Mysteries*:

> He found no-one at the well, and went to the monument of the rather forgotten poet Uz. Here a man came forward, gave him a bag, stabbed him and fled. Of the man he gave discrepant descriptions. He became incoherent, and died (1904: 137-138).

11. In this context, it would be interesting to ascertain whether Dickens had read about Kaspar Hauser. There is much in his work which echoes the story - the melodrama, the theme of beleaguered innocence, even the romantic elements of a hidden high-born origin.

12. All quotations from Feuerbach's text are drawn from the original Boston text, unless the quotation refers to editorial material not present in the first edition. The German original can be found in the endnotes. Quotations from Daumer, Hauser and Lubeck all derive from the 1834 edition. Additional information may be found in the relevant articles on Feuerbach in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* and on Stanhope in the *D.N.B.* There is a biography of Feuerbach written by his son: Ludwig Andreas Feuerbach, *Anselm, Ritter von Feuerbach's Biographiser Nachlass*, 2 volumes (Leipzig: Verlags buchhandlung von J.J. Webber, 1853).

13. Stanhope's letters provide evidence that he remained a believer in Hauser's authenticity until after the boy's death (Mackensie, 1981-2: 124). Unless we imagine these letters to be conscious deceptions, this disproves Evans' allegations regarding Stanhope's complicity in Hauser's fate.

14. The English translation omits two chapters from the German text. These are the first chapter, which gives Hauser's autobiography, and the fourth chapter, which contains additional notes made by Stanhope for Merker. The English translation includes a map of Nuremberg, indicating the shoemaker's house in the Unschlittzplatz, the Rathaus, and the houses of Binder, Daumer, and the Captain.

15. This text was published by Swan Sonnenschein & Co. This firm were involved with the publication of numerous German and German-influenced texts in England from the 1880's to the 1900's, playing a particularly significant role in the popularisation of the Kindergarten movement, and of German educational theorists, in particular Froebel and Herbart.

16. The Duchess's full name was: Catherine Lucy Wilhemina Primrose, Baroness Dalmeny, afterwards Vane, afterwards Powlett, Duchess of Cleveland.

17. It is also possible that the debunkers are also involved in a subtle anti-Germanism, in which (contrary to Rupert Brooke noting that "*das Betreten ist verboten*") German high-flown romanticism is contrasted unfavourably with British good sense. In Headlam's case, he seeks attack not "Germanism", but "Romanticism".

18. The place of England in the Hauser texts is a curious one. Like Hamlet, Hauser is continually bound for England, but never actually arrives there. As well as the interest raised by Stanhope's English origins, it is possible that England retains in Germany the kind of political meanings it had in France in the previous century. That is, it can exist as a symbol of enlightened and democratic government.

19. "'Sein ganzes Benehmen war, so zu sagen, ein reiner Spiegel kindlicher Unschuld; er hatte nichts Falsches an sich; wie es ihm um's Herz war, so sprach er sich aus, soweit es nämlich seine dürftige Sprache zuließ'" (Feuerbach, 1832a: 34).

In connection to Hauser's inability to lie, Leonard Shengold in his chapter on Hauser in *Halo in the Sky: Observations on Anality and Defense* (New York and London: 1988) links the report that Hauser never dreamed (or never recalled dreaming) until he slept in a bed at Professor Daumer's house with an inability to fantasize which may provide a pathological motivation for what Feuerbach depicts as a saintly aversion to falsity: Hauser's imagination was too impoverished by his situation to construct a lie. (Shengold assumes that Hauser's history is what he declared it to be).

20. "Mild, sanft, ohne lasterhafte Neigungen, ohne Leidenschaften und Affekte, gleicht sein immer sich gleichbleibendes, stilles Gemüt einem spiegelglatten See in der Ruhe einer Mondscheinnacht" (Feuerbach, 1832a: 142).

21. "So kam denn Kaspar freilich ohne Vorurtheile, aber auch ohne allen Sinn für Unsichtbares, Unkörperliches, Ewiges auf die obere Welt, wo er, vom betäubenden Strudel der Außendinge erfaßt und umhergetrieben, mit den sichtbaren Wirklichkeiten schon allzuviel zu tun hatte, als daß auch noch das Bedürfniß zum Unsichtbaren in ihm so leicht hätte aufkommen können. Nichts hatte anfangs Wirklichkeit für ihn, als was er sehen, hören, fühlen, riechen und schmecken konnte; und sein erwachter, bald auch grübelnder Verstand ließ von allem dem nichts gelten, was nicht auf seinem sinnlichen Bewußtsein fußte, nicht in den Bereich seiner Sinne gestellt, in die Form eines ihm nahe liegenden groben Verstandesbegriffs gebracht werden konnte" (Feuerbach, 1832a: 115-6).

22. It is possible that there is some allusion here to the fate of Paola and Francesca in Dante's *Inferno*: the implicit idea is that Hauser is simply in love with the created world.

23. "Um seinen plump materialistischen Vorstellungen etwas abzugewinnen, versuchte es Professor Daumer auf folgende Weise, ihn wenigstens vorläufig für die Denkbarkeit und Möglichkeit einer unsichtbaren Welt, besonders einer Gottheit, empfänglich zu machen. Daumer fragte ihn, ob er nicht Gedanken, Vorstellungen und einen Willen in sich habe, und, als er es bejahte, ob er diese sehen, hören u.s.w. könne? Da er mit Nein antwortete, machte ihm sein Lehrer bemerklich: wie es folgich, nach seinem eignen Bewußtsein, Dinge gebe, die man nicht sehen, noch sonst äusserlich wahrnehmen könne. Kaspar gestand dieses zu und war sehr erstaunt über die Entdeckung der unkörperlichen Natur seines innern Wesens. Daumer fuhr fort: ein Wesen, das Denken und Wollen könne, heiße ein Geist, Gott sei nun ein solcher Geist und verhalte sich zu der Welt, wie Kaspars eignes Denken und Wollen zu seinem Körper; wie er (Kaspar) in seinem Körper durch unsichtbares Denken und Wollen sichtbare Veränderungen hervorbringen, z. B. seine Hände und Füße bewegen könne, so könne es auch Gott in der Welt; Er sei das Leben in allen Dingen, Er sei der in der ganzen Welt wirkende Geist. - Professor Daumer befahl ihm jetzt, seinen Arm zu bewegen, und fragte ihn: 'ob er nicht zu gleicher Zeit auch den andern Arm aufheben und bewegen könne?' Allerdings! 'Nun denn', fuhr Daumer fort, 'so siehst Du also daraus, daß Dein unsichtbares Denken und Wollen, das ist Dein Geist, zu gleicher Zeit in zweien Deiner Glieder, also an zwei verschiedenen Orten zugleich sein und wirken kann. Dieses ist denn eben so bei Gott, aber im Großen, und nun wirst Du ungefähr verstehen, was das heißt: Gott ist allgegenwärtig.' - Kaspar bezeigte große Freude, als ihm dieses klar geworden war, und äusserte zu seinem Lehrer: was er ihm da gesagt habe, sei doch etwas 'Wirkliches', während andere Leute nie etwas Rechtes ihm darüber gesagt hätten" (Feuerbach, 1832a: 116-8).

24. "Sein Gesicht, in welchem die weichen Züge eines Kindes mit den eckigen Formen des Mannes und einigen, leicht gezogenen Furchen vorzeitigen Alters, herzgewinnende Freundlichkeit mit bedächtlichem Ernst und einem leichten Anflug von Melancholie sich vermischen; seine Naivität, zutrauliche Offenheit und oft mehr als kindische Unerfahrenheit, verbunden mit einer gewissen Art von Altklugheit und vornehmer, doch ungezwungener Gravität im Reden und Benehmen; dann die Schwerfälligkeit seiner, zuweilen nach Worten suchenden, oft fremdklingenden, harten Sprache, bei der Steifheit seiner Haltung und der Ungelenkigkeit seiner Bewegungen, - lassen ihn jedem beobachtungsfähigen Auge als ein Gemisch von Kind, Jüngling und Mann erscheinen, ohne daß man sobald mit sich einig werden könnte, welcher Altersstufe dieser einnehmende Mischling wirklich angehöre" (Feuerbach, 1832a: 139-140).

25. This may be the result of Hauser's lack of knowledge about the nature of appropriate responses. Considering that what Hauser says about his upbringing is true, we need to consider the effects of development in isolation. Babies learn ways of responding to external stimuli by imitating the responses that parents show them to be appropriate. (This presupposes an innate capacity to respond to experience through imitation, and

might further simply mean that babies adapt their innate sensations to a series of disciplines or repressions?) In lacking others who might help him mediate and comprehend the world, Hauser remains trapped in the overwhelming comprehension of the presence of things.

26. The key study of this field is Henri F. Ellenberger, *The Discovery of the Unconscious: The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry* (1970) (London: Fontana Press, 1994). Further background information concerning mesmerism, "sensitives", and magnestism can be found in Robert Darnton, *Mesmerism and the End of the Enlightenment in France* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968).

27. For additional information on Justinus Kerner and Friedericke Hauffe see Henri Ellenberger, *The Discovery of the Unconscious* (London: 1994: 78-81) and Justinus Kerner, *Die Seherin von Prevorst* (Stuttgart and Tübingen: 1829), translated as *The Seeress of Prevorst* (London: 1845).

28. "Hauser wurde von der Nähe dieser Person auf's Widerwärtigste angegriffen, so wie hinwiederum sie von Hauser eine besonders widrige Wirtung verspürte. Ich bestimmte Hausern über die Empfindungen, die er hatte, folgendes zu Papier zu geben.

"'Als ich an das Zimmer kam und die Thür von der Kranken geöffnet wurde, welche ich nicht kannte, fühlte ich ein plötzliches Ziehen auf beiden Seiten der Brust, als wenn man mich in das Zimmer ziehen wollte, als ich hinein trat und an der Kranken vorüber gieng, wehte mich eine sehr starke Luft an und als ich die Kranke im Rücken hatte, wehte es von hinten und den Zug, welchen ich vorher an der Brust fühlte, fühlte ich nun an den Schultern. Als ich auf das Fenster zugieng, folgte mir die Kranke von hinten nach, indem ich Herrn v. Tucher fragen wollte, bekam ich ein Zittern im linken Fuß und es wurde mir unwohl, sie gieng wieder zurück und das Zittern verlor sich, sie setzte sich auf das Kanapee und sagte: wollen sich die Herrn nich setzen? [...] Herr Prof. Hensler sagte ihr, daß ich der Mensch seh, der geschlagen wurde; indem bemerkte sie meine Narbe und deutete darauf hin, da gieng mir die Luft stark an die Stirne und ich bekam Schmerzen daran; auch fieng mir der linke Fuß stark an zu zittern. Die Kranke setzte sich auf das Kanapee und sagte, daß ihr übel sen und ich sagte auch, daß mir so unwohl sen, daß ich mich setzen müsse. Ich setze mich in das andere Zimmer, nun fieng auch der andere Fuß an zu zittern. Obgleich mir Herr v. Tucher die Kniee hielt, so konnte ich sie doch nicht stille halten. Nun bekam ich starkes Herzklopfen und mir wurde im ganzen Körper heiß; das Herzklopfen ließ nach und ich bekam Zittern im rechten Arm, welches nach einigen Minuten aufhörte und mir wurde wieder etwas besser. Dieses Befinden blieb sich gleich bis den andern Morgen, da bekam ich wieder Herzklopfen und Zittern in die Gliedern, doch nicht so heftig; nach einer halben Stunde verlor es sich wieder; Nachmittag um 3 Uhr kam es wieder etwas weniger stark und verlor sich noch früher, ich bekam eine weiche Deffnung und eine halbe Stunde darnach wieder eine, darauf wuder mir wieder ganz wohl'" (Daumer, 1832b: 30-32).

29. Anselm Ritter Von Feuerbach, *Narratives of Remarkable Criminal Trials* (London: 1846) was translated and edited by Lady Duff Gordon. The work is an abridged version of a much longer work, *Merkwürdige Criminal-Rechtsfälle* (Giessen: 1808).

30. "Freilich aber waren seine Sprechversuche geraume Zeit ein so lückenhaftes, dürftiges, kindisch unbehülfliches Wortgehäcksel, daß man selten bestimmt wissen konnte, was er mit seinen durcheinander geworfenen Redebruchstücken ausdrücken wolle; immer blieb dem Hörenden vieles zu errathen und durch Vermutungen zu ergänzen übrig. An ein zusammenhängendes Reden und Erzählen war bei ihm vollends noch nicht zu denken" (Feuerbach, 1832a: 38-39).

31. "Diese Geschichte der geheimnisvollen Gefangenhaltung und Aussetzung eines jungen Menschen ist nun fürwahr nicht nur ein grauenhaftes, sondern auch ein seltsames, dunkles Rätsel, wobei sich ausserordentlich vieles fragen und rathen, aber wenig mit Gewißheit beantworten läßt, und welches natürlicher Weise, so lange noch nicht dessen Auflösung gelungen, mit jedem andern Räthsel die Eigenschaft gemein hat, daß es - räthselhaft ist" (Feuerbach, 1832a: 49).

32. "Ich hörte das nähmliche, was ich zum erstenmal hörte, ich meinte aber doch, es ist etwas anders, weil ich es viel stärfer hörte; es ist auch nicht das nähmliche gewesen, sondern (statt) das die Uhr geschlagen hat, war es geläutet worden. Dieses hörte ich sehr lange; aber nach und nach hörte ich immer weniger, und wie meine Aufmerksamkeit weg war sagte ich jene Worte, "dahi wies wo Breif highört" womit ich sagen wollte: er möchte mir auch ein solches schönes Ding geben und möchte mich nicht immer so plagen [...] Ich fieng wieder an zu weinen und sagte die gelernten Worte; damit wollte ich sagen: warum wenn die Pferde so lang nicht kommen und lassen mir immer so wehe thun? Ich wetnte sehr lange und der Mann kam nicht mehr. Ich sagte die Worte, ich wollte sagen warum ich denn jetzt nicht mehr gehen lernen muss. Ich hörte die Uhr schlagen, diese nahm mir immer die hälfte Schmerzen weg und worüber mich der Gedanken tröstete, das jetzt bald die Pferde kommen werden. Und während dieser Zeit, als ich horchte, kam ein Mann zu mir her und fragte mich um allerhand Sachen, ich gab ihm vielleicht keine Antwort, weil meine Aufmerksamkeit auf das gerichtet war, was ich hörte. Er satzte mich am Kinn an, hob mir den Kopf in die Höhe, wodurch ich einen schrecklichen Schmerzen in den Augen fühlte von der Tageshelle. Von dem Mann, von dem ich jetzt spreche, dieser war bei mir eingesperrt gewesen, wovon ich auch nichts wußte, das ich eingesperrt bin. Er fieng an zu sprechen, ich horchte sehr lange und hörte immer fort andere Worte, jetzt sagte ich meine gemerkten Worte, 'dahi wies wo Brieg hi ghört' 'I möcht a söchana Reiter wern wie Vater is' womit ich sagen wollte, was denn dieses gewesen sen, welches mir in den Augen so wehe getan hat, wie du mir den Kopf in die Höhe gehoben hast. Aber er hat mich nicht verstanden, was ich gesagt habe, er hat wohl verstanden was die Worte heißen, aber nicht was ich gewollt hätte. Er ließ meinen Kopf los, fetzte sich neben mich her und fragte mich immer aus; unterdessen fieng die Uhr zu schlagen an [...] ich sagte zu ihm: 'I möcht a söchana Reiter wern' u.s.w. womit ich sagen wollte er solle mir ein solche schönes Ding geben; aber er verstand mich nicht, was ich wollte, er sprach noch immer fort; ich fieng an

zu weinen und sagte: 'Ross ham,' womit ich sagen wollte: er solle mich nicht immer mit dem Sprechen so plagen, es thut mir alles sehr wehe. Er stund auf, gieng an seine Lagerstätte hin und ließ mich allien sitzen. Ich weinte sehr lange; ich fühlte große Schmerzen in den Augen, so das ich nicht mehr weinen konnte. Ich saß sehr lange Zeit allein. Jetzt hörte ich ganz etwas anderes, worüber ich mit einer solchen Aufmerksamkeit horchte, die ich gar nicht sagen kann. Dasjenige, was ich hörte, war die Trompete in der Kaiserstallung, aber ich hörte es nicht lange, und als ich nichts mehr hörte, sagte ich, 'Roß ham' er solle mir auch so etwas schönes geben. Jetzt kam der Mann zu mir her und sagte etlichemal sehr langsam diese Worte vor, ich sagte es ihm nach; er sagte: 'weißt du nicht was dieses sen?' Ich sagte diese Worte zu ihm etlichemal, damit wollte ich sagen: er solle mir bald die Roße geben und möchte mich micht immer so plagen. Der Mann langte nun den Wasserkrug hin, der unter meiner Pritschen stand und wollte trinken, aber ich langte darnach und sagte, 'Roß ham.' Der Mann gab mir gleich den Krug, ließ mich trinken; als ich das Wasser getrunken hatte, wurde mir so leicht, welches sich nicht beschreiben läßt. Ich verlangte die Pferde von ihm und sagte, 'Roß ham' worauf er etlichemal sagte, ich weiß nicht was du willst, ich sagte auch die Worte nach, ich konnte es aber doch nicht gleich so deutlich nachsprechen und sagte 'I wäs net' und mit dem Roß ham wollte ich sagen er sollte mir auch meine Roße geben. Er verstand mich nicht, was ich gewollt hatte und stand auf, gieng an seine Lagerstätte hin und ließ mich allein sitzen [...] Jetzt kommt der Gefängnißwärter Hiltel, brachte das Brod und Wasser, welches ich gleich erkannte und sagte zu ihm 'I möcht ah a söchana Reiter wern, wie Vater is' damit sagte ich zu dem Brod: jetzt du nicht mehr fortgehen, und mich nicht mehr so plagen lassen. Er legte das Brod neben mich hin; ich nahm es gleich in die Hand; das Wasser schüttet er in den Krug hinein, stellte ihn auf den Boden hin. Jetzt fieng er mich auszufragen an. Er fragte mich mit so rascher Stimme, welche mir viele Schmerzen verursachte im Kopf, ich fieng an zu weinen und sagte, 'I möcht ah a söchana Reiter wern, wie Vater is' 'ham weisen' 'I wäs net' 'In groß Dorf, da is dei Vatter.' Diese Worte gebrauchte ich ohne Unterschied, um dieses zu verlangen, was ich gewollt hätte. Der Gefängnißwärter gieng fort, weil er mich nicht verstanden hat, er verstand wohl die Worte, was es heißen, aber nicht was ich damit gesagt habe und ich verstand ihn auch nicht, was er zu mir gesagt hat" (Daumer, 1832a: 52-6).

33. "Nur wer das erfahren und gelitten, was Kaspar, kann wie Kaspar sein; und wer so sich zeigt wie Kaspar, muß in dem Zustande gelebt haben, wie ihn Kaspar von sich erzählt hat" (Feuerbach, 1832a: 61).

34. "Als reifer Jüngling, der seine Kindheit und Jugend verschlafen, zu alt, um noch als Kind, zu kindisch unwissend, um als Jüngling zu gelten; ohne Altersgenossen, ohne Vaterland, ohne Aeltern und Verwandte: gleichsam das einzige Geschöpf seiner Gattung: erinnert ihn jeder Augenblick an seine Einsamkeit mitten im Gewühl der ihn umdrängenden Welt, an seine Ohnmacht, Schwäche und Unbehülflichkeit gegen die Macht der über sein Schicksal gebietenden Umstände, vor allem an die Abhängigkeit seiner Person von der Gunst oder Ungunst der Menschen" (Feuerbach, 1832a:143).

Unsurprisingly, Stanhope seeks to discredit Hauser as an unique case, instancing two cases that he considers to bear resemblances to Hauser's situation (as Feuerbach does also - but with a manifestly different intent: his presentation of Hauser as special is never challenged). Stanhope writes of an incident that occurred in Nuremberg in the same year that Hauser appeared there (with the implicit suggestion that Hauser was imitating this case). On the death of a local lawyer named Fleischmann, his son was found living in a back-room, into which he had moved at the age of twelve to remain there for twenty-six years.

The other case that Stanhope mentions is that of a discovered imposter - again carrying obvious implications:

> In the year 1817 or 1818, there appeared upon the south-west coast of England a female imposter who was not born far from the place, who two years before, disguised in man's clothes, had been employed in a farm, and had afterwards made the acquaintance of some gypsies. She appeared under the name of *Caraboo*, as a native of India, and had an unknown language and writing. She seemed on her arrival very weary; her hands showed that she had not been accustomed to hard labour; she ate no meat, drank only water, and had the greatest horror of wine and spiritous liquors. She was extremely neat in her dress, very modest in her behaviour, and her whole conduct made such a favourable impression as removed all suspicion of imposture. After this cheat was discovered by an English Physician, with whom I was acquainted, she related that she had played this part without any preparation; that she had learned it through the different observations which were made in her presence, and which were supposed to be unintelligible to her (Stanhope, 1836: 19-20).

35. There might be a parallel between this process of Hauser's decay and Stanhope's own relation to Hauser. In *German Life and Letters* (Oxford, 1981-2, Vol. 35: 122-4), Paul Mackensie notes in passing that in one passage from Stanhope's text, the roles of Hauser and Stanhope could be reversed, without changing the sense of the passage.

It is possible to trace in Stanhope, a period of narcissistic desire followed by a complete rejection (assuming Stanhope started his relationship with Hauser with good intentions). Stanhope therefore echoes Hauser's own movement from infatuation with the external to a rejection of it as inherently vile. Shengold's reading of Hauser's anality then finds a mirror in Stanhope's account, depending as it does on an abrupt change from guardian to antagonist.

36. This may also be seen as alluding to the unmetaphorical accusations made by Stanhope, Lang, and others that this wound (like his death wound) were self-inflicted. Hauser is unlucky by any standards, receiving, as he did, two stab wounds and a gunshot wound in the couse of four and a half years.

37. "Die ausserordentliche, fast übernatürliche Erhöhung seiner Sinne hat ebenfalls gegenwärtig ganz nachgelassen und ist beinahe auf das gewöhnliche Maaß herabgestimmt. Er sieht zwar noch

immer im Dunkeln, so daß es für ihn keine wahre Nacht, sondern nur Dämmerung gibt; doch ist er nicht mehr im Stande, im Finstern, wie sonst, zu lesen oder in weiter Entfernung die kleinsten Gegenstände zu erkennen. Während er ehemals bei dunkler Nacht weit besser und schärfer sah, als bei Tag, ist es jetzt umgekehrt. Gleich andern Menschen verträgt und liebt er nun das Sonnenlicht, das nicht mehr, wie sonst, seine Augen verwundet. Von der Riesenhaftigkeit seines Gedächtnisses und andern staunenswürdigen Eigenschaften ist keine Spur mehr zu finden. Nichts Ausserordentliches ist mehr an ihm, als das Ausserordentliche seines Schicksals und seine unbeschreibliche Güte und Liebenswürdigkeit" (Feuerbach, 1832a: 150-1).

38. A novel was published on Hauser which took the hints expressed by Feuerbach and developed them into a full-blown romance narrative:

> His story acquired an importance which in no way belonged to it, from his having been supposed to be the rightful heir of a Sovereign Prince in Germany, and M. Von Feuerbach, who entertained that impression, alludes to it, in figurative but expressive language, at the end of the seventh chapter of his work. That idea forms the subject of a novel, which is admirably written and extremely interesting, called "Caspar Hauser, the Foundling, romantically represented," (*Kaspar Hauser, der Findling, romantisch dargestellt*), published at Stuttgart in 1834; and which, should any curiosity remain on the subject, may be brought before the English public (Stanhope, 1836: vii).

The anonymous writer of this novel (a *roman à clef*) was probably a man called Seybold (Evans, 1892: 140). As far as I know the curiosity of the English public was never satisfied by a translation of this work. With regards to Stanhope's supposed emnity to Hauser, and the desire to cover up his royal heritage, it seems odd that the preface to his translated work should so enthusiastically recommend a novel which portrayed the contrary view. It is possible that Stanhope was not responsible for the preface or the translation: it may also be the case that a novel was to Stanhope's mind the ideal place for such speculations, as opposed to a supposedly objective factual account.

Another of Hauser's detractors, Meyer, saw the adolescent's defenders as "romantic dreamers", desirous of enveloping Hauser's insignificant life with a "romantic halo" (Evans, 1892: 155-6).

39. In an article in *German Life and Letters* (Oxford, 1974-5, Vol. 28: 199-210), A.F. Bance notes that the first explicit statement of the Baden thesis occurs in Joseph Garnier's pamphlet, *Einige Beiträge zur Geschicte Kaspar Hausers* (1834).

Bance also argues convincingly for the presence of another theme allied to that of the abandoned royal child, this being the education of a "Dümmling" to the position of the courtly. Bance cites *Parzival* and *Simplicissimus* as analagous cases.

40. "Der zweite Pfingstag gehört zu Nürnberg zu den vorzüglichsten Belustigungstagen, an welchen der größte Theil der Einwohner sich auf das Land und in die benachbarten Ortschaften zerstreut. Die, im Verhältnis zu ihrer dermaligen spärlichen Bevölkerung, ohnehin sehr weitläufige Stadt, wird dann, zumal bei schönem Frühlingswetter, so still und

menschenleer, daß sie beinahe weit eher jener verzauberten Stadt in der Sahara, als einer rührigen Gewerbs- und Handelsstadt zu vergleichen wäre. Besonders in einigen von ihrem Mittelpunkte entfernteren Theilen kann dann leicht manches Geheime öffentlich geschehen, ohne darum aufzuhören geheim zu sein" (Feuerbach, 1832a: 1).

41. In *The Story of Nuremberg*, Cecil Headlam relies upon a similar idea:

> We began by hinting that the atmosphere of Nuremberg is medieval, that of a city of legend. We will close this account of her history with the brief narration of her last, her nineteenth century myth (Headlam, 1899: 107)

42. "In gewissen Gegenden Deutschlands, welche ein zweiter Dupin auf seiner Landkarte der Aufklärung mit Dunkelgrau ausmalen dürfte, sind ähnliche Ereignisse, wie sie Hauser von sich erzählt, nichts weniger als unerhört. So sah Dr. Horn noch vor wenigen Jahren in dem Krankenhaus zu Salzburg ein 22jähriges nicht häßliches Mädchen, das bis in ihr 16tes Jahr in einem Schweinstall unter den Schweinen auferzogen worden war und darin viele Jahre mit übereinandergeschlagenen Beinen gesessen hatte. Das eine Bein war ganz verbogen, sie grunzte wie ein Schwein und betrug sich ungebärdig in ihrem menschlichen Anzug" (Feuerbach, 1832a: 50).

43. The two cases are: "*Frances Riembauer*, the Tartuffe of Real Life"; and "*Anna Maria Zwanziger*, the German Brinvilliers". The first illustrates reality by an appeal to literature, and is therefore the closest to the technique employed in Hauser.

Also of interest is the story of "*James Thalreuter*; or, the False Prince". It seems that Thalreuter himself claimed to be that which Feuerbach thought Hauser to be - an abandoned child of royal birth, "the son of the reigning Duke of B____ ..." (Feuerbach, 1846: 183). Feuerbach's scepticism regarding Thalreueter's claims might lead us to be more impressed with regards to his beliefs about Hauser:

> Notwithstanding the improbability of the whole of this story, which stood in direct contradiction with all that the Stromwelters knew of Thalreuter's real origin - and they even possessed his certificate of birth - the weak heads of the worthy couple were too easily turned by the grandeur of the romance, and the desire of increasing their limited means, not to give implicit belief to the tale (Feuerbach, 1846: 184).

44. The epigraph is:

> Righteous Heaven, who hast permitted
> All this wo; what fatal crime,
> Was by me, e'en at the time
> Of my hapless birth, committed.
>
> SIGISMUND.
>
> *In Calderon's Life, a Dream.*

45. "Allein dem Arme der bürgerlichen Gerechtigkeit sind nicht alle Fernen, noch alle Höhen und Tiefen erreichbar, und bezüglich mancher Orte, hinter welchen sie den Riesen eines solchen Verbrechens zu suchen Gründe hat, müßte sie, um bis ihm vorzudringen, über Josua's Schlachthörner, oder wenigstens über Oberons Horn gebieten können, um die mit Flegeln bewehrten hochgewaltigen Kolossen, die vor goldnen Burgthoren Wache stehen und so hageldicht dreschen, daß zwischen Schlag und Schlag sich unzerknicht kein Lichtstrahl drängen mag - für einige Zeit in ohnmächtige Ruhe zu bannen.

Doch, was verübt die schwarze Mitternacht,
Wird endlich, wenn es tagt, ans Sonnenlicht gebracht" (Feuerbach, 1832a:138).

46. Ursula Sampath notes that twentieth century works have continued to assert a connection between Hauser and Christ (Sampath, 1991: 79-93). Werner Herzog's film on Hauser (1974) explores this identification: Hauser is seen imagistically as a Christ killed by his own father.

47. For Feuerbach an attack on the church might also entail a veiled attack on the monarchy:

> It was natural, given the close association between throne and altar in the Lutheran areas of Germany since the Reformation, that the Protestant church was a firm ally of the monarchy (Sagarra, 1980: 23).

However, Bavaria was mainly Roman Catholic, and so this link may not have been present to Feuerbach's mind.

48. This is made apparent in Herzog's film on Hauser, where the actor who plays Hauser is (like the child in Truffaut's *L 'Enfant Sauvage*) a down-and-out.

49. Another kind of developmental narrative might be implied here: that is, one deriving from the educational theories of Rousseau, and, more specifically, Pestalozzi, Froebel, and Herbart. A Pestalozzian novel on Hauser's story was published in 1870 (Carl Ferdinand Gutzkow, *Die Söhne Pestalozzi's* (Berlin: 1870)).

50. "Auch über die Geschicte der That haben wir vor der hand keine andere Kunde als die Erzählung Desjenigen, an dem sie begangen worden; aber die Wahrheit der Erzählung ist uns verbürgt durch die Persönlichkeit des Erzählenden, an dessen Leib, Geist und Gemüth - wie wir noch umständlicher erfahren werden - die That selbst in sichtbaren Zügen deutlich geschrieben steht. Nur wer das erfahren und gelitten, was Kaspar, kann wie Kaspar sein; und wer so sich zeigt wie Kaspar, muß in dem Zustande gelebt haben, wie ihn Kaspar von sich erzählt hat" (Feuerbach, 1832a: 60-1).

51. With regards to Hauser's person verifying his story this would include (indeed depend upon) the fact that his presence requires belief, simply because imposture would itself be as strange and unfathomable as Hauser's own reported story:

> In all that time there was never a moment when Kaspar's conduct was not in accordance with the natural development of his character in view of the

> alleged circumstances of his early life. It was impossible that he should have been an imposter, impossible that an imposter should carry on such a game so long and so successfully. To feign what Kaspar Hauser accomplished would have required a command over the bodily functions such as no human being ever possessed, a knowledge of mental processes which a philosopher might envy, and a skilfulness of impersonation which would do credit to the most consummate actor (Evans, 1892: 129).

52. It may be that Lang's 1893 account also employs nuances gained from ideas of recapitulation: "What they saw was a youth of about seventeen, with fair hair and blue eyes, the lower part of his face slightly projecting like a monkey's" (Lang, 1893: 116).

53. "Geistiges und physisches Leben, welche, bei naturgemäßem Entwicklungsgange, mit einander gleichen Schritt halten, haben sich auf diese Weise in Kaspars Person gleichsam von einander losgerissen, und in naturwidrigen Gegensatz gestellt. Die verschlafene Kindheit konnte darum, weil sie verschlafen worden, nicht *überlebt* werden; er muß sie *nach* leben, und sie wird ihm nunmehr zur Unzeit, eben darum aber auch nicht als lächelnder Genius, sondern wie ein beängstigendes Gespenst bis in die späteren Jahre folgen" (Feuerbach, 1832a: 59).

54. "... so war doch offenbar das Allerlei von Menschen, deren Massen Kaspar Hauser Preis gegeben war, nicht wohl geeignet, eine naturgemäße Entwicklung dieses verwahrlosten Jünglings zu fördern [...] Was ihm aber auf diese Weise zukam, konnte doch nicht zum kleinsten Ganzen sich gestalten; alles zusammengenommen häufte sich nur als ein ungeordnetes, zerstreutes, buntes Allerlei von hundert und tausend Halb-und Viertels-Vorstellungen und Gedanken-bruchstücken auf-und nebeneinander" (Feuerbach, 1832a: 87).

55. Finger prints as evidence of evolutionary position forms a commonplace of degeneracy and race theories in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. See, for instance, Francis Galton, *Finger Prints* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1892). Mark Twain's use of finger prints to establish identity in *Puddenhead Wilson* (1894) may have influenced Burroughs.

56. It is tempting to make a connection to Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* which is in this sense as close to *Tarzan of the Apes* as it is to Conrad's *Heart of Darkness.*

57. Lang translates the inscription on the grave as, "Here lies Kaspar Hauser, the riddle of his age. His birth was unknown, his death mysterious", and the epitaph at the site of his murder as "Here the Mystery was Mysteriously Murdered" (Lang, 1893: 121).

ENDNOTES TO CHAPTER SIX:

1. In *Something of Myself*, Kipling cites his sources as a tale of masonic lions, H. Rider Haggard's *Nada the Lily* (London: 1892) and his own tale of Indian forestry, "In the Rukh", from *Many Inventions* (London: 1893). Roger Lancelyn Green has identified the tale of Masonic Lions as "King Lion", a children's story probably written by James Greenwood (Kipling, 1977: 174). In a letter to Edward Everett Hale, 16 January, 1895, Kipling mentions the *Jatakamala* and the tales (probably unwritten) of native hunters (Kipling, 1990, 2: 168). A reviewer ("Baron de Book Worm") in *Punch* ("The Jungle Books", 1894) suggested *Uncle Remus* and Aesop's *Fables* as possible sources. Beyond the shared resemblance of these being beast tales this seems unlikely.

2. It is likely that R.A. Sterndale's book was a source for both John Lockwood Kipling and *The Jungle Books*. It contains a reference to the Lucknow case, and mentions one of the few facts used by Kipling in "In the Rukh": that is, that most "wolf children" die young. Sleeman's pamphlet was reprinted in Vol. 12 of *The Zoologist* (London, 1888: 87-98).

3. In *Beast and Man in India*, John Lockwood Kipling describes how the pariah dog "longs to acknowledge a master" (1891: 299). He quotes Lord Byron as saying that the master of a well-trained dog is that animal's divinity: "The Indian pariah does not know the joy of adoration; he has no master, and is an atheist in spite of himself" (1891: 298).

4. Robert A. Sterndale's *Denizens of the Jungles*, a source for Kipling's stories, likewise depicts a world of violence. Nearly all the pictures in the book depict either a moment of imminent danger, of violence, or the aftermath of violence. For instance, the picture "Waiting for Father" shows young bear cubs, and in the bottom right-hand corner their dead father being carried off on a pole by hunters. The accompanying prose comments with a callous and sentimental leer:

> Waiting for father indeed! Poor little towsy tykes! If they but looked round they would see him being carried off in the distance, whilst luckily for them, the umbrageous shelter of their tree screens them from the hunter's eye. But they were not destined to escape for long (Sterndale, 1886: plate IV).

5. John Lockwood Kipling writes:

> All nature fights. We are nowadays familiar with false phrases such as "unnatural strife" and the like, used in denunciation of one of the central instincts of life, but at heart we acknowledge that war is always natural to man and beast (1891: 383).

6. In an essay on Kipling, Lionel Trilling writes perceptively of the presence of the father in both *The Jungle Books* and *Kim*:

> *Kim*, like *The Jungle Book*, is full of wonderful fathers, all dedicated men in their different ways, each representing a different possibility of existence; and the charm of each is the greater because the boy need not commit himself to

> one alone but, like Kim himself, may follow Ali into the shrewdness and sensuality of the bazaars, and be initiated by Colonel Strickland into the cold glamour of the Reason of State, and yet make himself the son of the Lama, the very priest of contemplation and peace (Trilling, 1940: 122).

7. In *The Management and Medical Treatment of Children in India* (Calcutta: 1886: 12-13), Edward A. Birch describes the inability of western children to develop in the Indian climate beyond the age of five:

> There is a pretty general medical opinion that the Indian climate does not in any way injure the health of the European infant in the first year of its life; further than this, the conviction is prevalent that with proper precautions up to the age of 5 or 6 years the child may be reared nearly as satisfactorily in the plains of India as in Europe; but beyond these ages all are agreed that physical and moral degeneration occur. The child then "exhibits the necessity for change of climate by emaciating and outgrowing its strength" (Martin). So profoundly does the climate, after the period of immedicate childhood, influence the constitution that the effect of a more prolonged residence is rendered permanent throughout life [...] Dr. K. Mackinnon remarks that even where there is no tangible disease nutrition and oxygenation do not appear to go on favourably, the skin becomes pale, the muscles waste in substance and tone, the joyous spirits of children are wanting, the body is inert, and the mind listless. We daily observe evidence that "the European was not made for the climate, nor the climate for him" in attempts to rear children in the plains past a certain age (Birch, 1886:13-14).

In part, this provided a medical justification for the social practice of sending upper and middle class children back to England for their education at around that age. The degeneracy of colonial children is found, for instance, in the representation of Mary Lennox in Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden* (London: 1911).

India's parallel failure to progress was a commonplace of late Victorian and Edwardian theory, though its roots are found much earlier. Among popular exponents of this idea were J.R. Seeley and Benjamin Kidd.

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